

Amphibian / Reptiles

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Spring 2002

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Illinois Springfield Home

Renovation and Rededication 1988

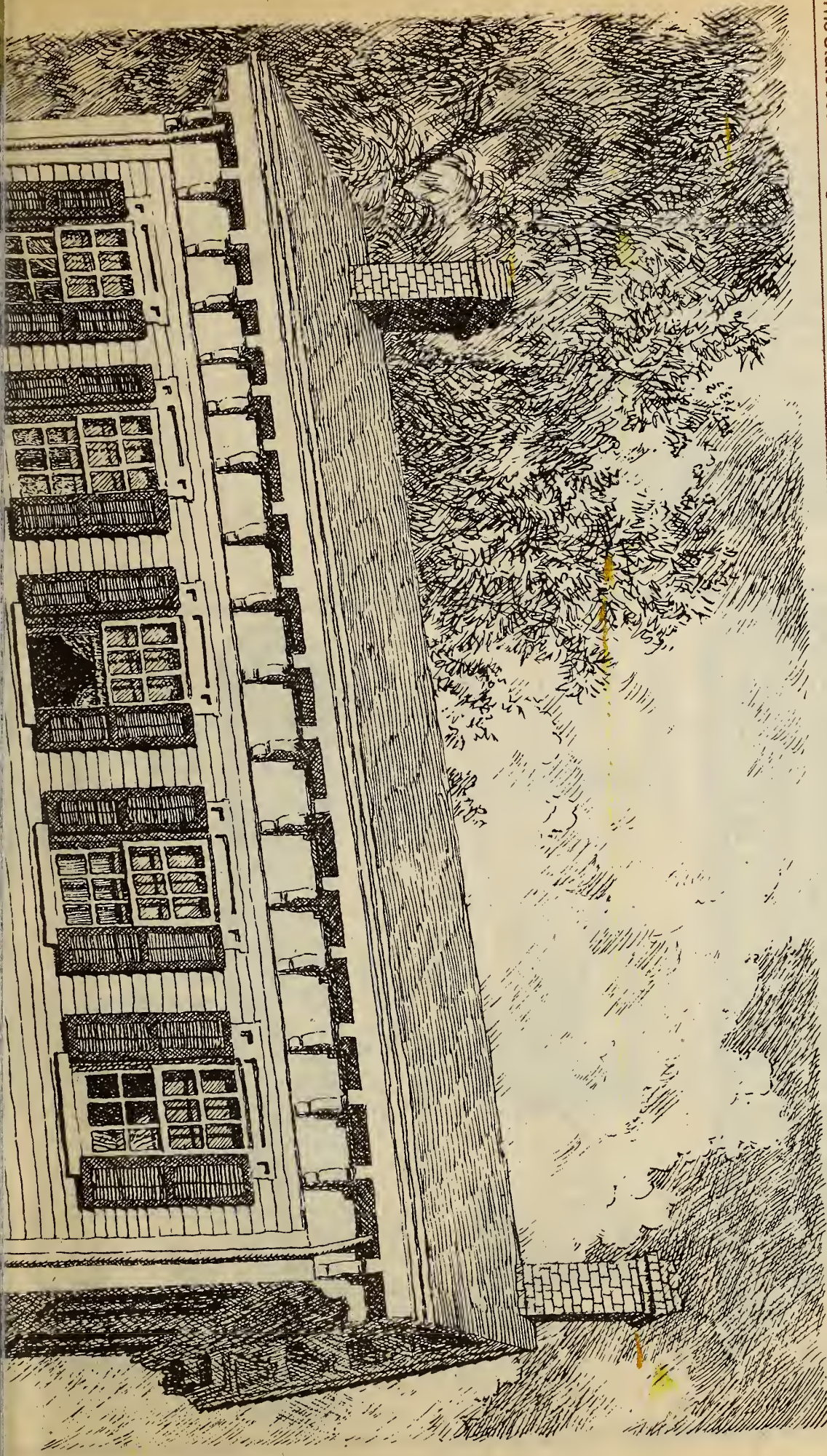
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The Weekend Journal

The State Journal-Register

June 20, 1986





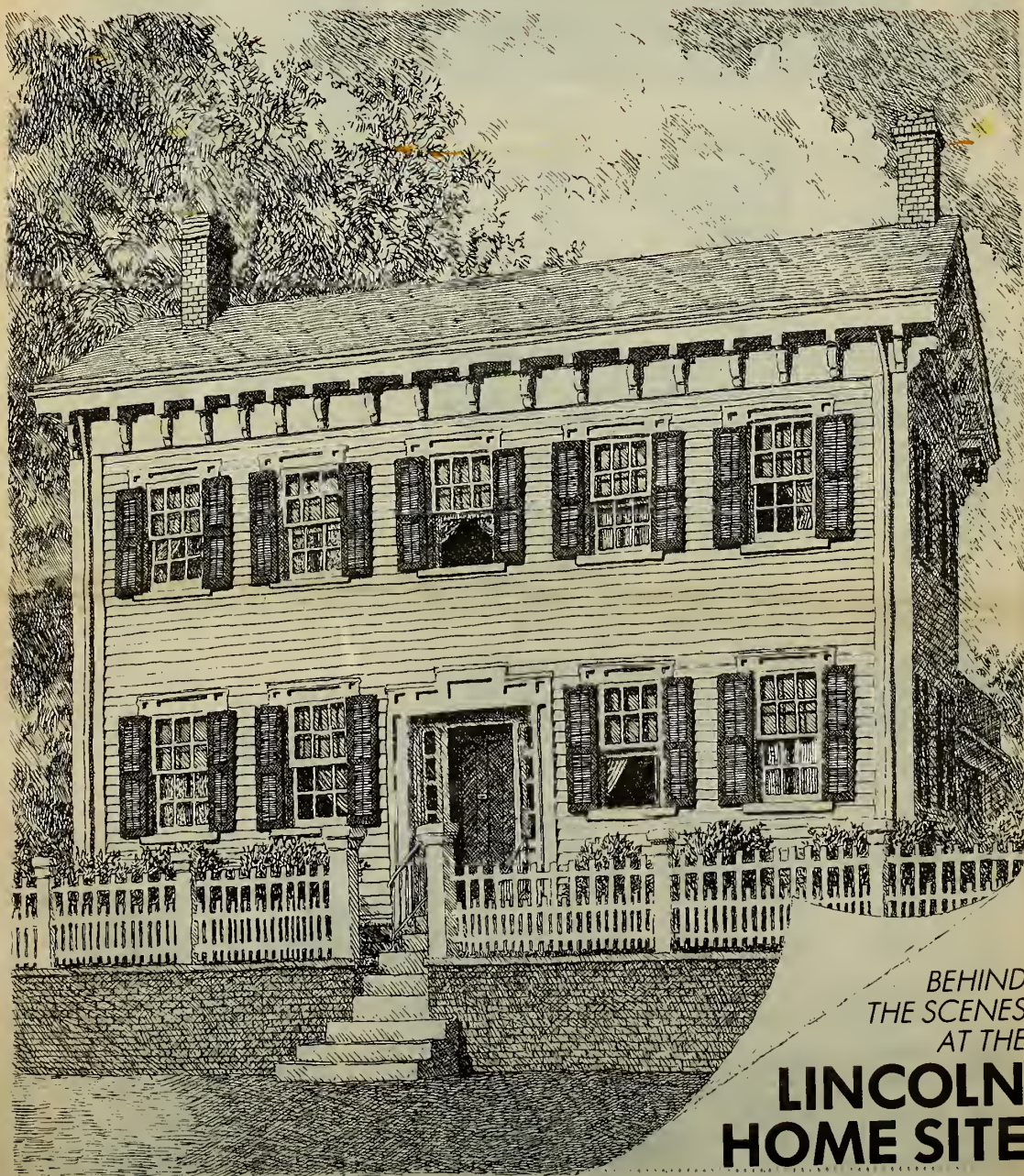
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The Weekend Journal

The State Journal-Register

June 20, 1966



BEHIND
THE SCENES
AT THE

**LINCOLN
HOME SITE**



KEEPING HOUSE AT LINCOLN'S HOME

TRYING TO RESTORE THE PAST, MAKE IT
ACCESSIBLE FOR THE PRESENT AND SAVE IT
FOR THE FUTURE — ALL ON A BUDGET

TEXT BY DOUG POKORSKI
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILL HAGEN

DICK LUSARDI, CHIEF OF MAINTENANCE AT THE Abraham Lincoln Home National Historic Site, is standing in the basement of Lincoln's Home, explaining the operation of the site to a visitor.

As Lusardi talks about plans for new fire and burglar alarms for the home, the basement ceiling creaks steadily overhead, straining under the weight of a throng of tourists.

A particularly loud creak stops Lusardi in mid-sentence. He motions toward the stairs and says, "Come on and get out of here before this thing collapses."

The Lincoln Home isn't really in danger of imminent collapse. But Lusardi is only half joking.

A steady stream of visitors — nearly 500,000 each year and as many as 4,700 in a single day — takes a toll on a structure that was built nearly 150 years ago for use as a one-family residence.

Keeping the home and the rest of the historic site standing is a major part of the job for the site's staff. Lusardi says doing that job means coping with what he calls the "contradictory philosophy" of the National Park Service.

"The basic mandate from Congress is to preserve and protect, and to use and enjoy. They contradict each other," he says. "You can't continually use something without destroying it."

"We're dealing daily with management decisions concerning how you use it, and still maintain it and have it for your great-grandchildren to come here and say, 'That's the home that Lincoln lived in.'"

And, according to Site Superintendent Jim O'Toole, another factor has to be dealt with in reconciling those two conflicting goals — tight purse strings.

"We're no longer in an expansion mode in the National Park Service," O'Toole says. "Throughout the Reagan administration, we have been trying to get more efficient in the way we operate. You're down to about as efficient as you're going to get."

Continued on next page

At left, Jim O'Toole, Superintendent of the Abraham Lincoln Home National Historic Site stands behind the Visitors Center.

Continued from page 9A

The Lincoln Home Site has a budget of \$790,000. About \$450,000 goes to the maintenance division, although \$50,000 of that amount comes "off the top" to pay for utility costs, Lusardi says.

The rest of the money is divided among the other departments at the site. They include administrative personnel who keep the books and handle the payroll, as well as the park rangers — what the Park Service calls the "interpretive division."

The Lincoln Home Site covers four city blocks on the southeast edge of downtown Springfield and includes 31 buildings — 15 that date to Lincoln's era. To operate and maintain the site, O'Toole oversees a staff that ranges in size from as few as 15 people in the winter to as many as 35 in the summer tourist season.

Staff members also include a historical architect who is there full-time and a team of five people working over the summer on a detailed architectural survey of all of the buildings on the site.

Rangers are the most visible park employees. They conduct the tours, answer tourist questions and "interpret" the site to visitors.

"The basic job is to provide interpretation in the Lincoln Home of the Lincoln Home," explains Chief Park Ranger Bob Holmes. "In addition to providing visitors with a sense of what the home meant to Lincoln, and what the years here in Springfield meant to Lincoln, there is specific information that they're looking for."

"We try very hard not to put together anything that will become a rote form of interpretation," he says. "We don't write out the things you should say in the Lincoln Home."

However, Holmes says, some emphasis is put on things the park rangers shouldn't say. "For example, many visitors come to the site with questions about Mary Lincoln."

"An often-asked question is, 'Was Mary insane?' That, so coldly stated, is a very unfair portrayal of Mrs. Lincoln. So the staff is encouraged to develop a good background on Mary and the emotional difficulties she did suffer. She has endured a great deal."

On a busy summer day, the rangers have 10-12 minutes to provide each group of visitors with an impression of Lincoln's family and home life, his relationship with the neighborhood and the community, and his activities during the 17 years he lived at Eighth and Jackson.

"We're working with a pretty tight time frame," Holmes says.

To prepare rangers, park officials try to "insure that each member of the staff is well grounded in the basic stuff," he says.

"They have the opportunity, the time in their daily schedule, and the direction to the best books, the best material, to put together this foundation of information."

Holmes has 12 full-time workers in his division, including a historian. The staff is bolstered during the heavy tourist season by temporary workers — frequently college students.

The park staff conducts a plethora of programs, ranging from the familiar

ranger-guided tours of the neighborhood, to puppet shows, film series, dramatizations and lectures.

Most of the people who take advantage of the site's offerings are tourists — Lincoln's Home is the city's most popular tourist attraction. The greatest number of out-of-town visitors come from other parts of Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin and California.

About 40 percent of the people attending park programs are from Springfield and the area, according to park historian George Painter.

"That figure varies, depending on the activity," Painter says. "Some of the lecture series on Lincoln have a mostly local audience. The (guided) neighborhood walk is mainly people passing through the area."

Local folk frequently come to the site when they have visitors to entertain, but others who live or work near the park take advantage of the facilities in a different way.

"We get quite a few who walk through on their way to work or appointments," Painter says. "I think they may choose to pass through because it's a nice place to talk, not necessarily because it's the most direct route. The historic neighborhood creates an atmosphere that people enjoy. We feel that's an appropriate use of the site."

Holmes and the interpretive division also oversee activities at the Visitors Center, which has undergone some major changes recently. Exhibits describing the other Lincoln sites in the area have been added, as has a new bookstore that carries nearly everything in print about Lincoln.

"We have about 260 titles," Holmes said, "and if we don't have it available here, we make an effort to get it."

The bookstore, operated by a non-profit foundation, returned about \$4,600 to the Lincoln Home last year. "That may not seem like a great deal of money," Holmes says, "but it helps a great deal. It's helping during the belt-tightening."

The Visitors Center also plans to add a second bookstore, which will feature information on the rest of the 330-plus sites operated by the National Park Service.

A LESS VISIBLE BUT equally important part of Holmes' staff is the three-person law enforcement unit involved in the park's "protection program."

These rangers have full federal law enforcement powers, including authority to make arrests and carry guns.

Holmes calls it a "low-key" operation, and the park cops don't carry their guns much of the time. "When they respond to an alarm is one of the times a firearm becomes part of their gear," he says.

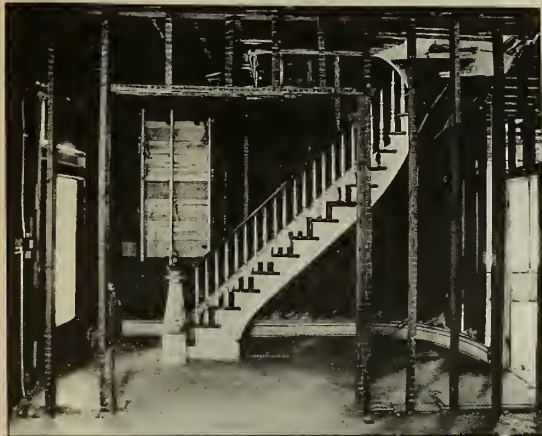
Although there have been some problems with vandalism and vagrants in the past, Holmes says, the historic site has few serious law enforcement problems.

"I think there is some truth to the viewpoint that the aura of Lincoln, the image of Lincoln, the spirituality of the area, helps provide a protection to the site," he says. "There has to be something unique about the area that would



National Park Service employees Tony Lowrence, above left, and Dan Evans repair the sidewalk paving tile on a corner in front of Lincoln's Home. The interior of the Sorch Cook home, below, once a boarding house, awaits restoration after being gutted. Gutting helps restorers find and analyze the original structure.





A spiral stairway, above, in the George Shutt house remains intact after the rest of the home has been gutted for structural work. Patrick Daugherty, below, a private landscaper, grades the ground between the George Shutt house and the Jesse DuBois house prior to seeding for grass.



help explain the very low amount of vandalism."

Maybe so, but there have been occasions when the "spirituality" of the area didn't prevent some rather worldly intrusions.

"In 1979 or '80, some of the young ladies who have things to sell had as their operating area what we call the Legacy Gardens at the east side of the park," Holmes says.

"There were a couple occasions when this selling activity was taking place during the daylight hours. It was thought to detract from the kind of visitor experience we're trying to present."

The "young ladies" were asked to move on, Holmes says.

Tourists visiting the park seldom make any trouble, he says. "Once in a while we have visitors ask if they can lie in Lincoln's bed and get a 'feel for the room,'" he says. "Other people have stepped over the railings into the rooms, but it's always for the purpose of getting a better camera angle. People wanting to take photographs in the house is probably the most common problem."

"One of the rangers was giving his presentation. He turned around and there was a youngster in the dining room, sitting in one of the chairs. Mother wanted to take a picture."

While Holmes' staff deals with the public on a regular basis, Lusardi's crews work behind the scenes to maintain the grounds and buildings.

The 16 non-historic structures in the park require fairly conventional care, but the 15 historic structures need special attention. And not all of the historic buildings are treated the same, Lusardi says.

"The Lincoln Home itself is important because of the individuals who occupied it and what those individuals did," he says. "Our principal purpose with this building is to preserve as much of the original material in place."

"The (other historical) houses in this area, their importance is to set the tone, to set the scene of what Lincoln knew."

As a result of that distinction, the park officials' goal is for the Lincoln Home to be as authentic throughout the building as possible. The neighborhood only has to look as it would have looked when Abe himself would stroll down Eighth Street.

The interiors of those houses are to be used "adaptively." That means they are to be brought into compliance with health and safety codes and with the requirements of modern businesses and then put to use, either by the park staff or by businesses that do not detract from the Lincoln Home.

The park staff currently uses several of the old houses for offices and storage, and a third is being renovated and readied for staff use. O'Toole and another staff member live in two of the homes.

One of the modern buildings on the site—the conference center, built in the 1950s—is used by both the park staff and community organizations, Lusardi says.

The conference center is used by park staff for seminars and conferences, and to hold regional meetings for the Park Service.

Not-for-profit community groups like the county historical society and the Abraham Lincoln Institute also use the

conference center, which includes a large meeting room complete with projection booth. Park officials are hoping to make the conference center even more useful for community groups by improving access for the handicapped.

Part of the Park Service's master plan "is to get involved in the community," Lusardi says. "This is one method of doing it."

ANOTHER WAY OF getting involved in the community is through the Park Service's historic leasing program. Through the program, the Corneau House has been leased to the Junior League of Springfield. Negotiations are ongoing for the leasing of the Stuve House for use as a bed-and-breakfast hotel.

O'Toole is also negotiating with the Springfield Police Department to have the department's horse patrol quarter its mounts part of the time in the newly restored Allen barn—a move that could add to the security of the site and add an air (not to mention aroma) of realism to the old barn.

"We're putting these houses back into the community," Lusardi says, "making this a focal point of life, bringing some economic benefit to the area."

Park officials see other benefits to the historic leasing program. It pulls the responsibility, and cost, of maintaining the buildings on the shoulders of the lessees, with oversight by park officials.

"That means our budget doesn't have to increase to maintain it," Lusardi says. "Somebody else can pay the electric bills. Somebody else can be the person with the watchful eye."

But leasing the buildings means finding somebody willing not only to restore the building's exteriors to their historic appearance, but also make the interiors usable.

"We have very few buildings that are safe," Lusardi says. Problems include electrical systems that often look like displays of "the history of electrical wiring," poor energy efficiency and frequent major structural problems.

Of the wiring in many of the homes, Lusardi says, "I'm surprised we didn't electrocute somebody. If nothing else, I'm surprised we haven't burned a building down."

Most of the old buildings are without insulation. In many, there is enough space between the outside boards for the wind to blow as freely inside as it does out.

Structural problems in the buildings stem from a number of causes. Some simply weren't built very well to start with. The Allen barn, for example, wasn't built to be level. It was built to follow the existing contour of the ground. Workers restoring the barn found a difference of nine inches between the roof height at opposing corners.

The original portion of the Cook House, located south of the Lincoln Home, appears to have been put together with scrap lumber that often wasn't the correct length. And the original carpenter was no master of his craft

Continued on next page

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— joists that start out six inches apart wind up with nearly twice that distance between them.

Structural problems are compounded by additions and modifications made over the years. The Cook House had four distinct additions to the original structure, Lusardi says.

The homes were modified to accept modern conveniences like indoor plumbing, gaslights and electricity. Some also were altered from single-family homes to become offices or apartments.

In the process, main supporting walls were weakened, sometimes critically. In the Shutt House, which is being renovated for use by the park staff, workers found an earlier owner had cut five supporting beams almost in half to put in plumbing for apartments. That meant that the only support for the roof over that part of the house was a door frame in one of the apartments.

"Up until the recent repairs," Lusardi says, "if I took this door frame out, the roof would have collapsed."

MAKING THE OLD buildings usable is a costly venture. Lusardi estimates it would take \$250,000 to make the Cook House habitable, and it's not the worst building on the site. In fact, he says, "it's one of the better ones."

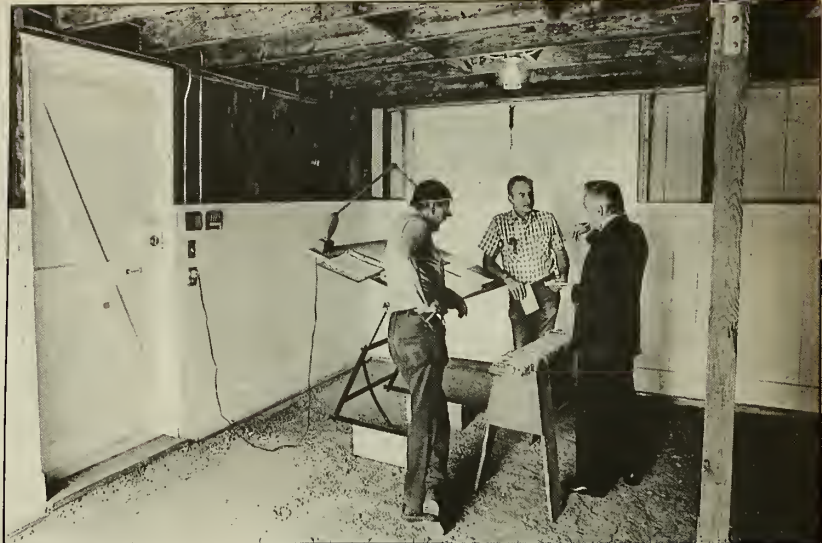
Park employees have been able to do emergency stabilization work on buildings like the Cook House, lessening the chances that they'll collapse. And electrical and heating systems have been turned off to minimize the likelihood of fire.

But the park doesn't have enough money to do major restoration on most of the buildings. With only a few thousand dollars a year to spend, only piecemeal repairs can be made, Lusardi says.

What the park really needs, he says, is an "angel" willing to spend big money for the privilege of leasing an office at the Lincoln Home Historic Site.

The Lincoln Home itself has fared better than most of the other historic buildings. It was fairly well-built to begin with, and it's been kept in close to original condition most of the time since.

Park officials are planning a major



Left to right, Bob Dunham, historic preservation work leader, Bill Hovener, contractor, and Dick Lusardi, chief of maintenance, meet in the newly restored Solomon Allen born, the only outbuilding from the Lincoln era at the site.

renovation of the home, scheduled to begin this fall, to strengthen the building structure and make the building and its furnishings look more like they did in Lincoln's day.

That will mean the home will be closed to the public while the restoration is being done. Park officials hope the home won't be closed long, but it could take from one to two years to complete the work.

A separate project is being planned to return the landscaping of the site to the less manicured look of the 1850s and eliminate any shrubs or foliage that weren't used in Springfield then.

Historic restoration is a series of compromises, and park officials have to make a lot of hard decisions concerning both the Lincoln Home and the other buildings.

Although their goal is to make the neighborhood look today as it did to Lincoln, in many cases there are no pictures or descriptions of the buildings as they looked then.

It is possible to tell what part of a structure is original, Lusardi says, but that doesn't necessarily give a clear idea of what it looked like.

"We know these four walls (were the original structure)," he says of one building. "Where does the door go? What kind of siding did it have on it? What kind of roof did it have on it? What color was the thing?"

In other areas, historical authenticity is simply not practical. The Lincoln Home, for example, needs strengthening with modern materials if the home is going to continue to welcome half a million visitors a year.

Even such small items as the posts supporting the balustrade need strengthening to survive the onslaught of tourists. The original wooden support posts have been replaced with steel ones.

Another example is the street in front of the home. Eighth Street was a dirt street in Lincoln's day. Park officials have experimented with a variety of materials to simulate dirt, but nobody has

invented a good dirt substitute that looks like the real thing but wears like asphalt.

As a result, the site has a "temporary" gravel street. The historically correct alternative would be a street that turned to mud whenever it rained.

"Everything we do may be historically correct and accurate, but what does that do to the building if we track mud in?" Lusardi asks.

Such weighty questions aren't the only problems park officials have to contend with, he says.

He points to the corner of the back porch stairs on one of the historic houses. Parts of the steps have been hacked or gnawed away.

"I think there's a squirrel in there, and there's a dog that wants at him badly," he says. "Right after we finished the exterior restoration here, the dog decided to chew up the staircase. I think it's the second or third time we've replaced it. The dog's doing a little remodeling of his own."

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Officials working to rebuild home-loving Lincoln image

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (UPI)—Abraham Lincoln might be one of the nation's most famous Presidents, but he was just another lawyer and a family man when he lived in the tan house with green trim on Eighth and Jackson streets.

And that's how the custodians of his home—the only one he ever owned—want visitors to know the nation's 16th President.

Today is the 175th anniversary of Lincoln's birth.

"We want visitors to get a sense of Lincoln as a man who lived and resided here," said James O'Toole, superintendent of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site.

"This is where a lot of his ideas were formulated. When he lived here ... he was a common man who worked here. He wasn't a President when he lived here."

Lincoln bought the frame house for \$1,500 in 1844. He lived there—except for the two years he served in Congress—until he became President in 1861.

Three of his four sons—Edward, William and Thomas—were born in the house and one of them, Edward, died there at age 4.

Since the National Park Service took over management of the two-story house from the state in 1971, officials have been working to restore the house and the neighborhood to the way it was in Lincoln's time.

Most of the houses in the area that were not standing during Lincoln's time have been torn down and several of the remaining homes have been restored to the shape they were in during the 1840s.

O'Toole said the home attracts about 400,000 visitors per year, half of them from outside the Springfield area.

"There's a tremendous affinity for Lincoln," O'Toole said. "He attracts a wide range of people."

But that's a mixed blessing for the 145-year-old house, which is beginning to show its age.

"The problem is when Mr. Lincoln purchased it, he had no idea the park service would run 400,000 people thru here," O'Toole said. "That's a lot of people going through the home and the home wasn't built for that."

The result—structural problems, including cracks and sinking foundations.

About \$1.4 million in federal funds have been allocated for repairs. Officials plan to survey the house and award contracts for the work by September, O'Toole said.

And maintenance is a continuous project, not just for the Lincoln home but for other homes in the area.

To help reduce upkeep and to speed up renovation, officials are working on plans to rent some of the houses on the street to people in the private sector.

Wraps coming off Lincoln Home

by Doug Pokorski

The wraps are coming off the Lincoln Home.

The home has been shrouded from view since November by a tent-like covering of vinyl polyester fabric.

The custom-made covering was draped over the home and heat was piped in so construction workers could continue a massive, \$1.7 million renovation project during the cold winter months. The project began last May.

Officials at the national historic site say the project will enter its final phase March 30, when the enclosure system will be removed.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. Officiating at the ceremony will be

Springfield Mayor Ossie Langfelder; John P. Clarke, publisher of the State Journal-Register; and a representative of Gov. James Thompson.

The plastic cover must go so workers can begin grading and landscaping around the home. The work will include laying sod and planting trees and shrubs.

Other exterior activities will include construction of fences and work on the retaining wall, exterior steps and brick paving around the home.

Interior work during the final phase of the project will include refinishing woodwork, installing wallpaper, carpets and visitor handrails, and refurbishing the rooms.

With the enclosure system removed, visitors will see for the first time in more than

a century the home painted in historically correct colors.

Although contemporary newspaper accounts indicate the home was brown in 1860, the correct shade of brown has only recently become known.

Officials of the National Park Service, which owns the home, conducted a detailed scientific analysis of paint chips to determine the correct color.

Park Service officials said earlier that the plastic enclosure system will be stored and may be used in the future on other buildings at the site.

The main goal of the renovation of the home is to ensure the stability of the 149-year-old structure. Nearly half a million visitors annually tour the structure, which was designed as a single-family dwelling.

The project has added heavy-duty structural supports throughout the building. All structural changes have been made so that they will not be visible to visitors.

The project will also restore the home to a condition that more accurately reflects its appearance when the Lincoln family lived there.

Changes were made in the appearance of the home, partly to accommodate tourists, when the structure was owned by the state of Illinois.

The National Park Service assumed responsibility for the home and the surrounding site in 1972.

The renovation project is expected to be complete by May 20. The home is scheduled to reopen to the public June 16.

Mr. Lincoln's house 'talking' to renovators

By RAY LONG
of the Journal Star

SPRINGFIELD — Pulling plaster from a kitchen wall during the current \$1.7 million restoration of Abraham Lincoln's home, the crew recently found a cache of documents, including an envelope addressed and signed by Lincoln and now valued at about \$2,000.

Other items found were a printed anti-slavery speech, a page from an 1855 newspaper and four letters written to Lincoln, this city's most famous resident before he became the nation's 16th president.

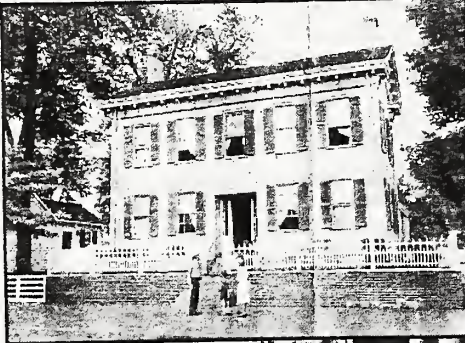
These new finds give historians more information about the lives and times of Lincoln, his wife, Mary, and their sons.

"The house is talking to us," said Vance Kaminski, the National Park Service's historical architect for the Lincoln home. He and about 20 others are working rapidly toward having the nearly 150-year-old house outfitted with steel-reinforced beams, a museum-quality heating/cooling system, refinished furniture and other, less conspicuous, refurbishments before the targeted rededication date of June 16.

A heated plastic tent has been draped around the house to ensure winter won't delay the reopening. It would mark the 101st anniversary of Robert Lincoln, the president's son, turning the house over to the public.

Already, a major hoopla with fireworks and entertainment is being developed and a "big splash" is anticipated from news media, said Nicky Stratton of the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau. "Lincoln, in general, is important to Springfield. We have the largest concentration of Lincoln historic sites in the country."

But those other sites, such as the Great Emancipator's tomb and the restored New Salem village, have carried the international tourism weight here since the home, which has 500,000 visitors annually, was shut down in May. Thus, Stratton has not seen a recognizable decrease in local tourism because of the home's closing.



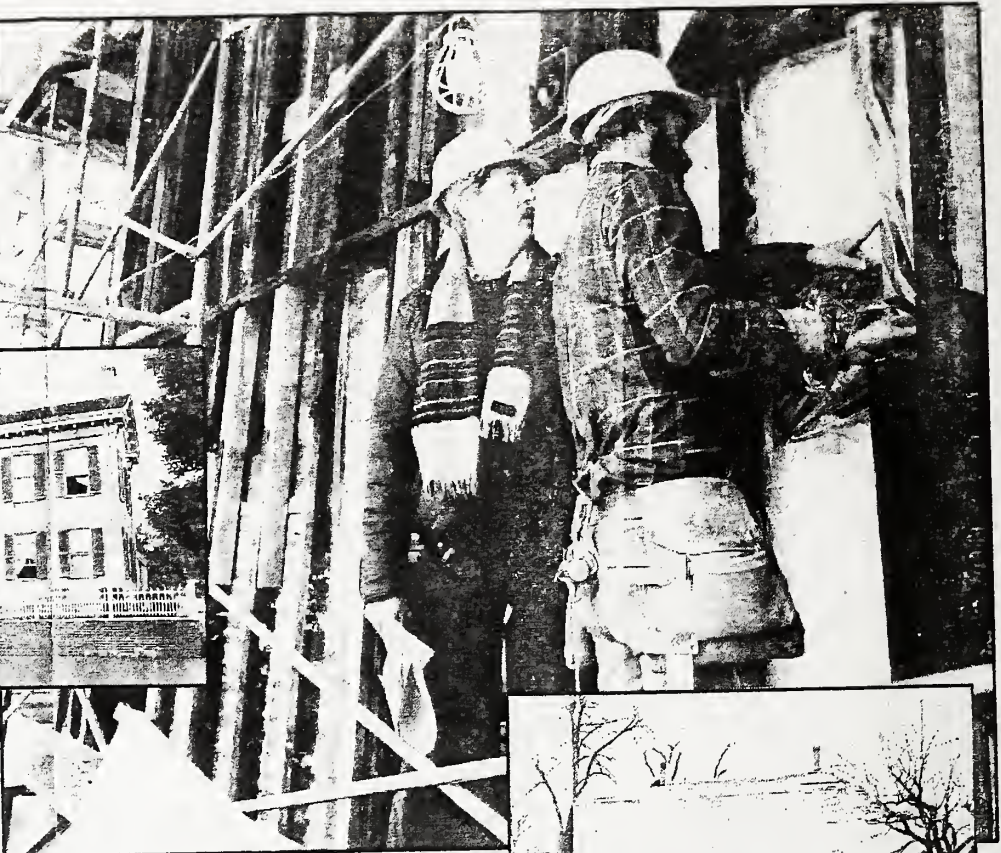
"Ironically, I think the closing will have a positive impact," Stratton said, predicting a large turnout after renovation.

This may be the grandest restoration project of national significance since the renovation of the Statue of Liberty. And apparently it was needed just as much.

"To do this kind of thing, we had to close the house," Kaminski said, who stressed that authenticity is the project's goal.

The parlor where Lincoln accepted the Republican nomination for the presidency was sagging despite a forest of wooden props shoring it up from the cellar below. The staircase, cantilevered off the adjacent wall but sufficient for a single-family house, began to bounce and spring under the collective weight of the sightseers.

"The sheer number of visitors passing through the home demanded extensive use of steel reinforcement to maintain the structure in the decades ahead," said Jeff Trevathan, vice president of the firm, River City Restoration of Hannibal, Mo., hired for labor and expertise. "Since no steel was used in the original building of the home, it was a matter of writing a new book in terms of introducing that kind of construction while



A protective vinyl vapor barrier is applied to the exterior walls of Abraham Lincoln's home in Springfield by construction worker Joe Hirner as architect Vance Kaminski looks on, above. Photo at left shows the historic home before renovation work began. Right photo shows the giant "tent" shrouding the home to allow work to proceed during cold weather. Anticipated completion date for the refurbishment is June 16.

maintaining historical accuracy."

Every new board is dated with a 1988 stamp. In fact, every move is documented so that future historians or rehabilitators will know what these laborers did in their quest to make the house look identical to Lincoln's time.

"We don't guess when we do something," Kaminski said. "If we don't know, we don't do it. We're using a rule of thumb that if a piece of wood is less than 50 percent deteriorated, you repair that piece of wood instead of replacing it. The home will be fully equipped with smoke alarms and security devices, but they will be virtually invisible to visitors as they pass through the home."

The old plaster, produced with a horse hair binding, has been reset after being pulled by tiny squirts of glue and then pushed back and screwed into place. All of this detail was used despite plans to cover it with fiberglass cloth and new plaster.

White walnut was used in the original home and pine was used for an addition added by the Lincolns, new siding, about 40 percent of which needs replacing, will be redwood.

Keys to a strongbox and three little boys' shoes have been pulled from the innards of the house, too. But it's difficult to determine whether they belonged to the Lincoln family or to others who occupied the house before it after he bought it for \$1,500 and lived there from 1844 to 1861.

The upwardly mobile Lincolns remodeled twice during their stay. But the restoration project is aimed at presenting the house as it looked before they left for the White House.

When the Lincolns bought the 1½-story house at Eighth and Jackson streets, the home was quite modest. With the expansion of Lincoln's fortunes, Mary saw that the house grew, too. In fact, the story goes that she

Please see HOUSE, Page B10

HOUSE

Continued from Page B1

had the roof raised when her husband was away on business.

No records indicated that the Lincolns ever hired an interior decorator, said John Brucksch, curator of historical furnishings for the National Park Service. But research showed that Mary Lincoln was very much in charge of the overall design of her home.

One major revelation about her

creativity came when workers found that some of the bedroom wallpaper was much cheerier than had been thought for years.

Pale striped wallpaper suggested in historic drawings made of the home during Lincoln's occupancy and implemented during a 1950s restoration has been proven inaccurate. In actuality, bright, vibrant wallpaper featured floral and botanical motifs in some parts of the house.

During the 1830s, a chemical sprayed upon some wallpaper to preserve it had actually caused it to darken, creating an increasing drab-

ness over the years. The original colors were found when an unsprayed scrap of wallpaper was uncovered during the renovation. Now, a California design company is carefully recreating the bedroom wallpaper to reinvigorate the house with a new look.

Dick Lusardi, chief of maintenance at the site, said Mary Lincoln's aristocratic background became more apparent with the detection of the elegant, flashy wallpaper. "This is Abe's house and Mary's house," Lusardi said. "He loved her."

The newly reinforced floors will allow visitors to the house to actually walk through Lincoln's bedroom and the adjacent bedroom for Mary. Before restoration, visitors could merely peek through the bedroom doors. The new walkway is also aimed at letting visitors better understand the house and the Victorian practice of separate bedrooms for the upper middle class.

"It will be easier for the guides to explain that it was a custom of the era," Kaminski said, "not a reflection of the Lincolns' marriage."

**NEWS FROM
CORPORATE
COMMUNICATIONS**

CL: M. NEELY, File
**Lincoln's
home nears
reopening**

SPRINGFIELD (AP)—Abraham Lincoln paid just \$1,500 for the only house he ever owned, but nearly 150 years later \$2.2 million has been spent to fix it up before it's reopened to the public this summer.

"Back at that time, he got a good buy for his money," said Gentry Davis of the National Park Service. "It was a corner lot and a prime location with easy access to downtown."

A three-year renovation of Lincoln's two-story frame house enters its final phase Wednesday when workers remove a plastic shroud that cloaked the structure and allowed restoration to continue through the winter.

Workers then will put the finishing touches on the exterior and begin landscaping.

"At this point, we're on budget, on time and on schedule," said Richard Lusardi, the park service's maintenance chief for the project. "It will be ready for the grand reopening June 16."

Officials expect a tourist boom once it reopens, with the number of visitors swelling to as many as 1 million annually from about 500,000 of past years.

Lincoln was 35, a prosperous lawyer and a former state legislator considering a campaign for Congress when he moved his family into the house in 1844, five years after it was built.

He and his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, and their four sons lived in the house until 1861, when Lincoln moved to the White House.

"The furniture had suffered ultraviolet light damage, and the house had no air conditioning prior to the restoration, causing glue joints to dry out and separate," said Larry Blake, the site chief for visitor services.

To ensure that the restoration is as accurate as possible, officials analyzed paint and reviewed records of shops where the Lincoln family bought household goods.

"It's almost like trying to solve a mystery," Blake said. "You have to do a lot of detective work."

7/3/88

Gannett Westchester News

Shroud coming off Lincoln Home

By William Stracener

The Associated Press

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A three-year renovation of Lincoln's two-story frame house entered its final phase Wednesday when workers removed a vinyl polyester shroud that cloaked the structure and allowed restoration to continue through the winter.

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"At this point, we're on budget, on time and on schedule," said Richard A. Lusardi, the park service's maintenance chief for the project. "It will be ready for the grand reopening June 16."

Once it reopens park service officials expect a tourist boom, with the number of visitors swelling from the 500,000 average of past years to as many as 1 million annually.

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He and his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, and their four sons lived in the house until 1861 when he moved to the White House.

The house, administered by the park service since 1972, has undergone several renovations, most recently in the 1950s, but the current effort stresses historical accuracy.

Features added after Lincoln left for Washington have been removed. The park service has installed fire detection and suppression systems, burglary monitors and humidity controls, but they are neatly disguised.

The exterior has been painted in an authentic color for the time — mocha brown. Insulation and a vapor barrier were installed in the walls, which were replastered.

The interior is being refurnished with exact reproductions of wallpaper and rugs.

"The furniture had suffered ultraviolet light damage, and the house had no air conditioning prior to the restoration, causing glue joints to dry out and separate," said Larry Blake, the park service's site chief for visitor services.

"Some additional period pieces are being added to fill out the house. They are mostly knick-knacks and accessories on bureaus, for example, to add a lived-in look."

To ensure the restoration is as accurate as possible, restorers analyzed paint and reviewed records of shops where the family bought household goods.

"It's almost like trying to solve a mystery," Blake said. "You have to do a lot of detective work."

The finish on the woodwork, for example, was a very dark varnish. But a paint analysis showed it should be off-white, and the change has been made.

"Every day a new question comes up that doesn't have an easy answer," said Davis, superintendent of the Lincoln Home for the park service.

One of the biggest surprises for restorers was the discovery of a cache of documents inside a kitchen wall. The items, which will be displayed at the house, date to the 16th president's days as a congressman and include part of an envelope addressed and signed by Lincoln, four letters to him and a printed anti-slavery speech.

The cost of the renovation is being borne by taxpayers, not by tourists. A stipulation in the will of Robert Lincoln, the president's oldest son, who deeded the property to the state of Illinois, prohibits visitors from being charged.



Toby McDaniel

THE WHOLE IDEA was to reduce the load of paperwork saddling ill-fated schoolteachers — relieve them of the monotonous paper shuffling so they will have more time to teach.

Outlined in a program adopted on the state level about 18 months ago, it was dubbed the "Routine Task Reduction Plan."

School districts were directed to respond by June 1, 1988.

A Riverton teacher who received a memo about the program the other day had to laugh. While mentioning the reduction to paperwork, the memo noted all teachers will soon receive a questionnaire to fill out.

"Sounds like more paperwork to me," she quipped.

Well, one bureaucrat counters, the first step in reduce paperwork is to increase paperwork.

Hold the lettuce?

Chef's salads were a Thursday specialty at O'Malley's, and **HERB ROTH** was pushing them out as fast as he could.

But one woman sent hers back, complaining it didn't have any lettuce to it.

Sure enough, it didn't. But it was loaded with chopped ham and turkey.

Roth quickly figured it out.

In the rush, he'd grabbed a bowl of meat instead of a bowl of salad out of the refrigerator by mistake and topped it with tomato, egg, cheese and salad dressing.

"I thought it was kinda heavy when I sent it out," he said.

FOOD FOR THAW: When the lights went out across the Sangamon State University campus Thursday afternoon, so did refrigerators and freezers in the campus cafeteria.

It was indicated the outage could last for some time, says SSU's **AL BARNHART**, so the staff swung into action.

Calls went out to two suppliers, Meadow Gold Dairy and Bunn Capitol, for help.

Both companies sent refrigerated trucks to the campus.

Food was loaded into the trucks, which stood by until power was restored to the cafeteria — some 11 hours later.

Show biz

The first act finale of Medical Madness, a rousing musical tribute to **IRVING BERLIN**, will evolve into a video birthday card for the composer, who turns 100 next month.

The twin pianos of Dr. **FORD VAN HAGEN** and **BOB BECKER** will accompany the dance/song team of **NATALIE YAFFE** and **JAY KENNERLY**, leading the Friends of Memorial Medical Center kickline into "Alexander's Ragtime Band."

The number will be videotaped at dress rehearsal and sent to Berlin as a birthday greeting from the cast.



John Corbett, a worker for Pedigo Landscaping, puts a tree guard on an experimental hybrid elm tree in front of Lincoln's Home.

New hybrid replacing Lincoln elm

The Associated Press

Abraham Lincoln is an American legend, but the elm tree planted in the front yard of the only home he ever owned is a Japanese-Chinese hybrid.

The National Park Service is spending \$2.2 million to restore the two-story frame house and furnishings to their mid-1800s appearance. But officials ran into problems with the tree in the front yard.

"We decided to go with the hybrid because we didn't want a dead elm tree on our hands in 15 years," Park Service architect Francis Krupka said Friday.

Lincoln planted an American elm to the front yard of the house in 1844, the year he bought the home for \$1,500.

Krupka said officials decided to plant a cross between a Japanese elm and a Chinese elm because American elms are susceptible to fatal Dutch elm disease.

The hybrid is "virtually identical" to an American elm, except that it is about 10 feet shorter at maturity, Krupka said.

Park Service officials asked the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, a Chicago suburb, for an experimental hybrid elm that would be resistant to the fungus, Krupka said.

"It will have a close resemblance to American elm, has strong wood and will reach 60 to 70 feet in height and have exceptional dark green glossy leaves," said George Ware, research director and hybridizer of the elms at Morton.

The elm Lincoln planted was badly stunted, scrawny and stood only 15 feet high in 1860, Krupka said. But the tree was removed in 1905, shortly after being virtually destroyed by a thunderstorm, he said.

Two other elm trees subsequently were planted, but neither survived, and no elm has existed at the site since the 1920s, he said.

Park Service officials are in the final phase of the restoration, which is scheduled to be completed May 20.

The home is to reopen to the public on June 16.

About 500,000 people have visited the site annually for the past few years, but tourism officials predict the figure will grow to 800,000 in one million to coming years as a result of the restoration.

The house has undergone several renovations, most recently to the 1950s.

United Way director leaving for new position

Seven Soviet officials tour Lincoln Home

by Mary Nolan

Seven deputies from the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic received Wednesday the first official tour of the newly restored Lincoln Home.

The delegation was duly impressed by the elegant rooms with richly colored carpet and intricate wallpaper. They had more of a log cabin in mind when they imagined Abraham Lincoln's living quarters.

"We always pictured Lincoln living to a bouse with wood floors and wood walls," said one of the delegates.

Natalia Dmitrieva, department head of the Ryazan Medical Institute, said she first read of President Lincoln during her childhood.

"I felt a sincere admiration for him and now I realize that he is one of America's favorite presidents," she said through an interpreter. "Is this not true?"

"We saw with our own eyes how Americans respect and cherish their history ... No nation can have a future if it doesn't remember and respect its past," said Anatoli Gerasimov, head of the delegation.

The historic tour was a break from the group's crash course on the workings of the Illinois General Assembly and the state's legislative and political process.

The delegation's 10-day visit was sponsored by the General Assembly and the University of Illinois. It is the first Soviet-American exchange sponsored by the state. As part of the program, several state legislators plan to visit the Soviet Union later this year.

"The delegates are all parliamen-



State Journal-Register/Rich Saal

Park ranger Judith Winkelmann, left, explains details of the Lincoln Home to a delegation of visiting Soviet diplomats Wednesday afternoon. To Winkelmann's left are Serguei Emelianov, Oleg Kabanov and Khazhbikar Bokov.

tarians and they are the closest counterpart in the Soviet Union to our state legislators," said Karen Minnow, head of the U of I-Chicago.

Despite the contrasts in political systems, Gerasimov, a Leningrad Communist Party official, found common ground between public issues in Illinois and in Russia.

"People in our country, in Illinois and all over the world have some similar problems. The first is to survive this nuclear age. The second biggest problem is ecological, which is also important for all of mankind."

"And besides this there are social problems. Even in such a rich coun-

try as yours, social problems exist. We also have problems connected with urbanization and the growth of big cities, problems of crime, problems of drug addiction."

The housing shortage in the Soviet Union is the most urgent issue being tackled at the regional and national level, according to Gerasimov.

"I should also stress that there is a process of democratization in our country. That is why I am not going to answer all questions," Gerasimov said, inviting his fellow delegates to speak out.

Dmitrieva said she has a mandate from her constituents to work on im-

proving medical care for women and children in her region.

She said Soviet-produced medical equipment is hard to obtain and often not up-to-date with the latest medical standards.

Despite social and economic problems, Dmitrieva said reforms instituted under General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev have led to a "psychological renaissance" among all levels of people.

"Although in my country the government promises to provide everything for us, nonetheless I would like to see people get involved in constructive change to make life better."

\$20,000 in grants to fund Lincoln Home event June 16

Two grants totaling \$20,000 will help fund a daylong June 16 celebration of the reopening of the Abraham Lincoln Home.

The grants, which were announced Wednesday, were presented to the Junior League of Springfield, which is coordinating the reopening festivities.

The state Department of Commerce and Community Affairs awarded the Junior League \$15,000, and the Franklin Life Insurance Company contributed \$5,000.

The home has been closed since May 1987 during a \$2.2 million renovation and restoration project. The date of the reopening is the 130th anniversary of Lincoln's "House Divided" speech, and the 101st anniversary of the donation of the home to the state of Illinois by Lincoln's son, Robert.

The home has been administered by the National Park Service since 1972.

Reopening activities are scheduled to begin at about noon, and will include musical entertainment, 19th century military re-enactments, crafts and other demonstrations, children's games, guides in period costumes and fireworks.

President Ronald Reagan has been invited to attend the reopening.

Activities during the afternoon and evening celebration will include:

- Musical performances by the Military Airlift Command Band, Scott Air Force Base; the 144th Army Band, Illinois National Guard; the Feitsbans Fireballs, Feitsbans Elementary School; the Decatur Park Singers, from the Decatur Park District; the Union Baptist Choir, Union Baptist Church; the Colonial Fife and Drum Corps, Alton; the Springfield Municipal Band; and the Springfield Symphony Chorus, with Fritz Klein and Paul Presney.

- Military re-enactments by the reactivated Forty-First Illinois Infantry, Charleston, and the reactivated 17th Cavalry.

- Crafts demonstrations by the Clayville Folk Arts Guild.

- Historic storytelling and music by Dan Keding and Chris Vaillo.

- Re-enactment of a formal ball of the Lincoln era, by the Springfield International Folk Dancers.

- Costumed guides, provided by the Junior League, at homes in the Lincoln neighborhood. For further information on the reopening ceremony, call the site office, 492-4150. For information on the additional reopening activities, call Lois Strom of the Junior League at 546-5325, evenings.

Project to close Highway 31 south of Williamsville

WILLIAMSVILLE — County Highway 31 (5.75E) will be closed for about a week due to construction of a concrete box culvert 2½ miles south of Williamsville.

A new 7-foot-wide-by-5-foot-high box culvert will replace three existing metal pipes.

Road closure signs will advise motorists to take alternate routes.

Man helping patch

Travel

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 1988

HONEST, ABE!

LINCOLN'S OLD HOME GETS A NEW SPARKLE

By Jack Schnedler
Travel Editor, Chicago Sun Times



Abraham Lincoln's home, a National Historic Site in Springfield, Ill., reopens to the public Thursday after a \$2.2 million restoration. The house, freshly repainted in a rich Quaker brown, is the only one ever owned by the 16th president (portrayed above by Harry Hahn at the Old State Capitol).

FOR THE SUN-TIMES/Terry Farmer
PAGE DESIGN/Norm Schaefer

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—Abraham Lincoln's black stovepipe hat hangs once again in the alcove beneath the front staircase, as though the 16th president were back in the only house he ever owned.

When the Lincoln Home reopens to the public Thursday, after a complete restoration that took 13 months and cost \$2.2 million, the trademark hat will provide a counterpoint of familiarity to the sometimes startling new look of Downstate Illinois' most-visited historic site.

From the fresh paint job of rich Quaker brown outside to the bright carpeting and wallpaper inside, this is a home distinctly more inviting than its previous incarnation. Those rather dark and faded rooms, which almost seemed to portend Lincoln's assassination, have given way to bold—in a few cases, downright gaudy—colors.

It is easier now to imagine the sturdy clapboard house at Eighth and Jackson full of family laughter and love on a typical December evening in 1860. Lincoln, president-elect of a nation divided, has parked his stovepipe on the rack. He is tousing the hair of youngest son Tad in the sitting room while the maid readies dinner under Mary Todd Lincoln's watchful eye. Older sons Robert and Willie are finishing a chore out back. Upstairs, packing is already under way for the impending rail journey to Washington.

"If the Lincolns were to return today, I have no doubt that they'd feel right at home," says Gentry Davis, superintendent of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. He'll be welcoming dignitaries at Thursday's festive reopening ceremony—for which the original "A. LINCOLN" nameplate is being taken temporarily from a protective vault in the Illinois State Archives to replace the replica on the front door.

The Lincoln Home restoration, this year's showcase project for the National Park Service, has not been without controversy.

Some people argued that closing the property for 13 months and shrouding it for the winter in an unsightly plastic tent would disappoint too many visitors and have a depressing effect on Springfield tourism. But it's clear that the work could not have been finished so rapidly—and on schedule—any other way.

Frugal observers may raise an eyebrow at the spending of \$2.2 million in U.S. taxpayers' money to overhaul a frame house that cost Lincoln only \$1,200 in cash plus a \$300 vacant lot in 1844.

"You have to remember that this is the home of one of the most important and revered figures in American history," Davis responds. "We expect a million visitors annually, with no admission fee. In effect, if you figure a normal charge of \$2 a person, the work will be paid for in a year. And there'll be no need for another major restoration for the next 100 years."

A mild hubbub ensued over the foliage in front of the house, which anchors a four-square-block downtown pedestrian zone with the flavor of the mid-19th century. Early photographs show that a young American elm stood just beyond the white picket fence in 1860. It was reduced to a limbless stalk by 1905 and later replaced by a black ash that still spreads its branches at the corner.

Restorers at first intended to plant another Turn to Page 2

Artful Upper West Side story

The melody returns in Manhattan. Story on Page 4

Caribbean's summer bargains

Savings can reach 60 percent. Story on Page 6

'Mr. Lincoln's Hometown' is his showplace

By Jack Schnedler
Travel Editor, Chicago Sun-Times

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—When the license plates advertise "Land of Lincoln" and the billboards tout "Mr. Lincoln's Hometown," they're not kidding. Abraham Lincoln is the solo headline act in Springfield's tourism show.

Even the McDonald's at Fifth and Adams, across from the Old State Capitol, boasts an "Abraham Lincoln Museum"—actually a modest display focusing on the successful effort of Lincoln and other state legislators to move the Illinois capital here from Vandalia in 1837.

One great virtue of the Lincoln circuit is that almost all the sites are free of charge. Besides the newly restored Lincoln Home, they include:

- **Lincoln Home Visitor Center**, 426 S. Seventh St. Films and exhibits give an orientation to the home and Lincoln's life in Springfield. The book shop here is amply stocked with Lincoln material.

- **Lincoln Tomb State Historic Site**, in Oak Ridge Cemetery, 1500 N. Monument Ave. The president is buried a full 10 feet beneath his tomb in a steel-and-concrete vault. The atmosphere is suitably solemn and dignified. Each Tuesday at 7 p.m. through the end of August, visitors can witness a re-treat ceremony by the 114th Infantry Regiment in Civil War uniforms.

In another section of Oak Ridge Cemetery is the Illinois Vietnam Veterans Memorial, dedicated just last month. The impressive circular monument bears the names of 2,952 Illinois servicemen dead or missing in that conflict. It evokes the same tearful emotions as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington.

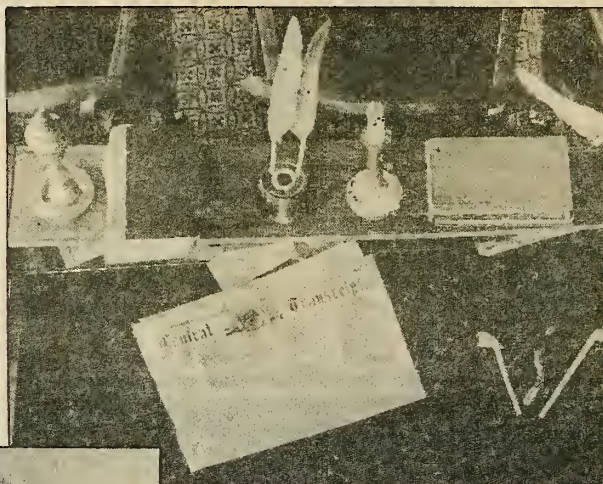


LEFT: Springfield's Old State Capitol is a major Lincoln site. **ABOVE:** Quills and candlesticks add a period look to the building's restored Hall of Representatives.

hand.

- **Lincoln Depot**, Ninth and Monroe streets. An imaginatively scripted slide show recounts Lincoln's rail trip from here to Washington to assume the presidency in 1861.

- **Lincoln-Herdon Law Offices**, Sixth and Adams streets. In this only surviving structure where Lincoln



maintained working law offices, visitors learn about his professional life.

- **Lincoln Family Pew**, in First Presbyterian Church, Seventh Street and Capitol Ave. The church also contains some handsome Tiffany stained glass.

- **Lincoln Ledger**, at Marine Bank of Springfield, Old State Capitol Plaza. The original ledger of Lincoln's account is on display during bank hours.

- **Lincoln Memorial Garden and Nature Center**, 2301 E. Lake Dr. This 80-acre garden is intended to reflect the Illinois landscape as Lincoln knew it.

- **Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site**, 20 miles northwest on Illinois 97 near Petersburg. Lincoln's life as a young man struggling to find his calling is recreated in this log-cabin village where he lived from 1831 to 1837.

The Great American People Show, in its 13th season at New Salem, will present the award-winning outdoor drama "Your Obedient Servant, A. Lincoln," nightly except Mondays from next Saturday through Aug. 20. Admission to the 8 p.m. show is \$6.50 for adults, \$5.50 for students and seniors, \$18.50 for

families. (Call 217-632-7755.)

Springfield's non-Lincoln attractions include the State Capitol Building, Illinois State Museum, the Governor's Mansion, the Vachel Lindsay Home, Oliver P. Parks Telephone Museum, Edwards Place historic home and art gallery, Henson Robinson Zoo, and Thomas Rees Memorial Carillon.

The annual International Carillon Festival runs today through Saturday in Washington Park. July 2-3 are the dates of this year's LincolnFest, a downtown extravaganza with a patriotic theme.

Specifically

For more information, contact Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, Box 1269, Springfield, Ill. 62705; call (800) 356-7900 or (217) 789-2360.

Honest, Abe! Your home looks much livelier

Continued from Page 1

American elm for authenticity, but were told that the species is prohibited by a Springfield zoning ordinance for fear of spreading Dutch elm disease. They chose instead a hybrid Japanese elm, which upset some purists because of its foreign origin.

They also changed their mind about cutting down the mature black ash, when it was pointed out that sweltering summer tourists would very much miss the shade. So both trees grace the landscape, the scrawny Japanese elm almost in the shadow of the ash.

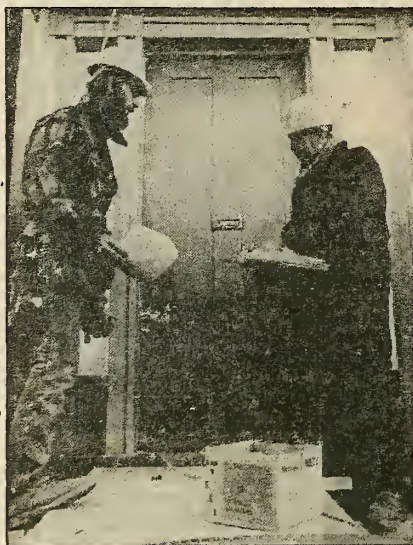
During the winter, a few skeptics were heard to wonder if there'd be anything left of the original Lincoln Home once workers wound up their hammering and nailing under the plastic shroud.

"We've stabilized the house with modern materials and installed a full climate-control system with air conditioning," says Davis. "But this is still the real Lincoln Home. We've preserved all we could, and we've time-stamped anything new with '1987.' We've hidden the ducts, electrical fixtures and other modern installations as inconspicuously as possible."

If you've toured the Lincoln Home in the past, as have so many Illinoisans on those school civics trips, the vivid color combinations of the new look may disconcert you. But experts are convinced that they reflect the actual appearance of the Lincoln Home toward the end of his family's 17-year residence.

"We asked ourselves what kind of a housekeeper Mrs. Lincoln was, and after a lot of research, we found she was quite a good one," says Ron Sheetz, furniture conservator for the National Park Service's Harpers Ferry Center, which produced a 400-page document minutely detailing how the house should be furnished.

"We know, for example, that she kept the curtains down, preventing the sun from



Abraham Lincoln's nameplate has stayed on the front door of his home through the 13-month work period.

fading the colors. We know that later owners of Lincoln furnishings did not take such good care of them. Accurate colors were found by looking where the sun didn't shine; under knobs, or where the wood or upholstery faced a wall."

Bruce Bradbury, whose California firm specializes in 19th century wallpapers, simi-

larly explains that "heaters and lights used in Lincoln's day created an ash that covered most everything in the home and had an especially negative effect on the wallpaper."

Luckily, restorers in Lincoln's bedroom uncovered a six-square-inch patch of wallpaper unaffected by ash, oxidation or light. It was, says Bradbury, "like an artifact from King Tut's tomb. We had no idea that colors as bright as cobalt blue were used in Lincoln's day." The swirl-pattern paper in Lincoln's bedroom is the wildest in the house.

Useful details on the home's appearance came from such down-to-earth sources as a newly discovered privy pit that contained broken dishes and glass bottles from the period. Among the numerous fresh touches, which Davis says are intended "to make it look more like people lived here," is a small wooden salt container hanging in the northwest corner of the kitchen near the cook stove.

Summer visitors will also see mosquito netting over Lincoln's bed and that of

Mary in her connecting bedroom.

And they may be surprised to find venetian blinds in the guest bedroom. "We believe a family as well-off as the Lincolns were by the mid-1850s would have had them," says National Park Service historical architect Vance Kaminski, a key figure in the restoration.

New steel beams to underpin the second floor, which was added when Lincoln enlarged the house in the early 1850s, will allow one notable change in the upstairs traffic pattern.

Instead of merely peering into Lincoln's bedroom, tourists will be able to walk through it for a close-up look at the shaving mirror and lap desk that are two of the 70 original Lincoln objects in the home. Guides will point out that the president—who disliked being called "Abe"—was clean-shaven for most of his life, until after the 1860 election.

He was growing the beard when the family left for Washington on Feb. 11, 1861. And he was surely thinking of the house at Eighth and Jackson when he made these famous farewell remarks to a thousand wellwishers gathered in a drizzle at the Great Western Depot.

"To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return. . . ."

He returned on a funeral train in the spring of 1865.

Specifically

Expecting large crowds in the weeks ahead, the National Park Service plans to keep the Lincoln Home open in the evenings for the first time. Daily hours through the summer will be 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Thursday's reopening is timed to coincide with the 101st anniversary of Robert Todd Lincoln's donation of the property to the State of Illinois. It was transferred to the National Park Service in 1972.

For information on Lincoln Home National Historic Site, call (217) 492-4150.

Lincoln's house gets a face lift

By JOHN DOWLING
Of the Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Seven score and four years ago, a lanky circuit-riding lawyer with political ambitions paid \$1,500 for a comfortable frame house on a muddy side street a few blocks from the new state Capitol.

He lived there with his wife and children for all but two of the next 17 years. The family moved out of town in 1861 and never returned.

Because the frontier lawyer's name was Abraham Lincoln, his Springfield home became a tourist site, drawing 500,000 people annually in recent years. That prompted a \$2.2 million renovation completed last month.

Restorers believe that if the former president and his family had walked in the door during the home's reopening yesterday, they would have been pleased with the result.

"At the moment, it probably looks an awful lot better than it ever did when they lived there," said Francis O. Krupka, historical architect for the National Park Service, which maintains the home.

The restoration is the product of three years of sleuthing by historians and architects pursuing details such as wallpaper patterns, the precise shade of brown on the home's exterior and whether the indoor woodwork was stained, varnished or painted.

Their search might seem to border on the obsessive, but restorers say they're assembling pieces of the historical mosaic of Lincoln's life.

"It demonstrates something of the environment that he lived and worked in, a remnant of the environment that produced the man and possibly influenced what he did," Krupka said.

Lincoln bought the house in May 1844 from Charles Dresser, an Episcopal clergyman who presided at Lincoln's wedding. After boarding at a tavern for \$4 a week and renting a cottage for his growing family, it was the only home Lincoln ever owned.

"The framework and floors were oak, the laths hand-split hickory, the doors, door frames and weatherboarding black walnut," poet Carl Sandburg wrote in "The Prairie Years," the first part of his epic Lincoln biography.

"The house was painted, one visitor wrote, 'a Quaker tint of light brown' ... Three blocks east the cornfields began and farms mile after mile."

Similar accounts by contemporary visitors, along with photographs and prints from Lincoln's time, served as important guides for restorers.

But the primary source of information, Krupka said, was the house itself.

"You can't after 150 years recreate an environment exactly when you have insufficient documentation," he said. "All you can do is make the best of what you have. ... You get in there and start looking at it and see the various details of the structure."

The restorers found that termites had bored a 6-inch tunnel through an 8-inch floor beam. Nails connecting structural timbers had loosened. Floors designed for a family were reinforced to bear the weight of tourist throngs.

But they also found solid evidence of the skill of the 19th-century tradesmen who built the house.

"It had some problems, but it was a very well-constructed house," Krupka said. "It had to be — otherwise it wouldn't have survived this long."

To ensure its survival, the house has been equipped with smoke detectors, automatic fire extinguishers, vapor barriers and systems to control heat and humidity — all neatly concealed in the original framework.

Set amid four blocks of restored 19th-century houses, the Lincoln home now appears, as best restorers can determine, as it did in 1860, when Lincoln was elected president.

"Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man," Lincoln told a crowd that had gathered at the train station in 1861 when he left Springfield to take office. "Here my children have been born, and one is buried."

"I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return."

City hiring freeze OK'd

by Jay Fitzgerald

A city council committee Thursday OK'd a hiring freeze in city government and created a new six-member panel to enforce it.

There appears to be enough support on the full council for passage of the ordinance next Tuesday.

The freeze would prohibit the hiring and promotion of employees — whether positions are funded in the budget or not — unless they're approved by the new panel or the full council.

The freeze is part of an attempt to save money, but it also involves a battle between aldermen and department heads over control of patronage jobs.

The council's personnel committee voted 3-0 to pass the freeze. But the vote came after a confusing discussion about which aldermen would sit on the panel to review hirings.

Ward 7 Ald. Barry Becker opposed using just members of the current personnel and finance

△ continued on page 2

Governor, legislators huddle on tax plan

by Jeff Brody

Saying progress had been made with his tax increase plan, Gov. James Thompson emerged from a Statehouse meeting with the four legislative leaders Thursday with the plan still on the bargaining table.

Although he refused to characterize whether the tax increase is closer to reality, Thompson expressed satisfaction that the leaders had agreed to meet again Tuesday to discuss the tax issue.

At the same time, the four leaders and Thompson appointed a panel of designers to meet and negotiate on issues of education reform, both for Chicago and the rest of Illinois.

"We had what I felt was a good first meeting," Thompson said. "The four legislative leaders, the

Other legislative news on pages 11, 17 and 39.

lieutenant governor and I have agreed to meet again Tuesday morning for breakfast at the (Executive) Mansion to explore the idea of a tax increase for Illinois."

The governor admitted there are still many stumbling blocks in the way of his proposal to raise state income taxes from 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent for individuals and from 4 percent to 5.6 percent for corporations.

"I don't know if we can work out an agreement," Thompson said.

"I don't know if we're any closer to a tax increase. Yes, there was progress made. I regard a two-hour summit meeting as progress."

"I think about everything in the world was mentioned today, nothing was ruled out, nothing was ruled in. We can be more definitive on Tuesday."

As the governor spoke to reporters, three of the four leaders left his Capitol office.

Republican leaders James "Pat" Pflipp of the Senate and Lee Daniels of the House said they would let Thompson speak for them.

Senate President Philip Rock, D-Oak Park, addressed the chamber briefly after the meeting, reporting to his colleagues that the meeting was a "successful exchange of information, but nothing definitive was decided" other than the appointment of the panel on school reform.

Rock is the only one of the four leaders who has

△ continued on page 2

Revelry reopens Lincoln Home

Crowd of 2,500 gathers to honor city's No. 1 son

by Doug Pokorski

A bustling, festive crowd of about 2,500 people gathered in front of the Abraham Lincoln Home Thursday to celebrate the reopening of the home of a man Gov. James Thompson called "the greatest American."

"You can learn about Abraham Lincoln from textbooks, from biographies, from Hollywood productions,"

- Lincoln and his Navy namesake have much in common, says Captain Jack Danlone, commander of the new ship. Page 2.
- New U.S. citizens are sworn in as part of reopening ceremonies for the Lincoln Home. Page 11.

Thompson said, "but only in Springfield, in this place, can you experience Lincoln."

The Lincoln Home has been closed to the public since May 1987, while it underwent extensive renovation and restoration. The work was designed to stabilize the house structurally and return its appearance to the way it looked in 1860, when the Lincolns last lived there.

Thursday's festivities had an old-fashioned feel, with a number of people in Lincoln-era costumes and traditional and martial music filling the air.

The official reopening ceremony began a moment after noon, with the presentation of the colors by the reactivated 114th Illinois Infantry.

As the blue-uniformed squad trooped in front of the house, the sun broke through the overcast sky, shining down on the men and the flag for the first time.

William Penn Mott Jr., director of the National Park Service, said the home is one of the most significant historic sites associated with Lincoln.

"Lincoln and his family resided in this house for 17 years," Mott said. "It is the only home he ever owned. There is no other historic building in the country which can reveal more about Lincoln as a husband, father, neighbor, politician and finally as president-elect."

"The Lincoln Home represents a crucial 17-year period in Mr. Abraham Lincoln's life. During these years, he grew from a self-taught lawyer with local political interests into a great statesman that the world remembers as America's 16th president."

Mott noted that Lincoln paid only \$1,500 for the house when he bought it in 1844. The Park Service paid an estimated \$2.2 million to restore the home.

"There are those who might question this cost," Mott said. "You must remember that when the National



Above, the Rev. Howard Milkmon of First Presbyterian Church delivers the invocation Thursday at the Lincoln Home reopening ceremony. Below, Sharon Green of Springfield uses binoculars for a closer look.

State Journal-Register/Greg Mallia

Park Service takes over a historic building or artifacts, or natural or cultural areas, we are responsible for these treasures forever. Forever. We consider the restoration of a building such as this an awesome responsibility, because we must ensure that future generations will have the same opportunities that you have today.

"Our principal goal has been to assure the stability of the 149-year-old building, which has been visited by approximately 10 million since becoming a National Park Service area in 1972. The project illustrates the National Park Service's fundamental commitment to the preservation of our nation's irreplaceable historic resources."

Thompson, well known as a history buff, invoked the spirit of Lincoln.

"We are united by the affection, even love, we feel for this man and what he did for the state and for our nation," Thompson said. "We've preserved an old house, but Lincoln saved a young nation."

"How did he do that? What was it about Lincoln that enabled him to succeed? And when will the whole world recognize that he was correct when he said, 'No man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent'?"

"This house was not restored because it is architecturally significant, although it is. This house was not restored because it is a prime tourist attraction in Springfield, though it is. This house was not restored because it happened to be the home of one of our presidents, although Americans are pretty generous about preserving our presidents' homes."

"The bottom line is, this house was restored and will be maintained in perpetuity because it belonged to the greatest American, Abraham Lincoln."

Thompson said the reopening of the home will mean an increase in tourism in Springfield.

"We can welcome a million tourists a year to this place, and they'll

buy the souvenirs and T-shirts and stay in our hotels and dine in restaurants and walk our streets," he said.

"They'll also learn about American history here, about Abraham Lincoln. They'll learn about his gentleness and his toughness. They'll see how he lived, the streets where he walked, visit his law office, the legislative chambers where he began his climb to the top of democratic government."

Thompson also used the occasion to make an oblique effort to advance his current political goals.

He made an apparent allusion to his campaign to persuade the state legislature to increase the state income tax, and to use the majority of the new money for education.

"Here was a man with but a year or two of formal education, learned... intermittently with little or no reading material, who had enough vision to say, from this place, that the first obligation of the state is for the public education of its children."



Lincoln Home reopens today

by Doug Pokorski

One of the crown jewels of the National Park Service, the Abraham Lincoln Home, reopens today, with activities beginning at 8 a.m. and continuing until after dark.

The home has been closed for more than a year for \$2.2 million worth of renovation and restoration.

The home has been operated by the National Park Service since 1971.

"The National Park Service has the honor to protect and manage places like Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell and the homes of most of our past presidents," said Don Castleberry, Midwest regional director for the park service.

"But Lincoln is such a transcendent figure in American history that this home and these activities stand well apart from and above anything we're involved in at this stage."

Site Superintendent Gentry Davis said the reopening means the public can again visit "one of the number one crown jewels in the National Park system."

The official reopening ceremony begins at 11:30 a.m., with a pre-program concert by the Military Airlift Command Band from Scott Air Force Base, Belleville.

The concert will be followed by the presentation of colors by the reactivated 114th Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry.

The ceremony will include remarks by William Penn Mott, director of the National Park Service; Lt. Gov. George Ryan; Secretary of State Jim Edgar; Attorney General Neil Hartigan; and Comptroller Roland Burris.

Also attending as a special guest will be Jack Dantone, captain of the USS Abraham Lincoln.

Gov. James Thompson, the main speaker, will place a brass nameplate on the door of the Lincoln Home. The Military Airlift Command Band will perform again from 1-2 p.m.

Thompson will tour the home beginning at 1:15 p.m., following a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The home will be open to the pub-

lic from 4-8 p.m.

Other activities will include:

- A flag raising, with appropriate military bugle calls, presented at the flagpoles southeast of the home's visitors center at 9 a.m. The flag raising will be conducted by the 114th Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry.

- Two performances by the Colonial Fife and Drum Corps, Alton, at 9:30 and 11 a.m. The performances will be on Eighth Street near the home.

- Naturalization for about 150 new U.S. citizens. The ceremony will be conducted by U.S. District Judge Richard Mills on Eighth Street near the home at 10 a.m. A group of Springfield attorneys called the Sangamon Bar Lawyers Chorus will perform patriotic music.

- A political speech in the style of the Lincoln era, presented by a member of the reactivated 41st Illinois Infantry, Charleston, at 2 p.m. The speech will be given at the corner of Eighth Street and Capitol Avenue.

- Patriotic music by the 144th Army Band of the Illinois National Guard, Springfield, from 2:15-4:15 p.m., on Jackson Street south of the visitors center.

- "Abraham Lincoln: A biography in Words and Music" — a recreation of an 1865 political rally — inside the visitor center at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Actor R. Frederick "Fritz" Klein will portray Lincoln, and attorney and actor Paul Presney, Jr. will portray his political ally, Jesse K. Dubois. The Springfield Symphony Chorus will perform music that played an important role in Lincoln's life.

- Songs and stories by Chris Valillo, from 4:30-4:45 p.m., at Eighth and Capitol. Valillo will be joined by Dan Keding for a second performance from 4:45-5:30 p.m. Keding will do a solo turn from 7:45-8 p.m.

- Vocal music by the Feitshans Fireballs, Feitshans Elementary School, Springfield, from 4:30-4:45 p.m., south of the visitors center.

- Contemporary choral music by the Decatur Park Singers, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., south of the visitors center.

- Ballroom dances of the Lincoln

era, performed at Eighth and Capitol by the Springfield International Folk Dancers, from 6:30-6:45 p.m.

- Music by the Union Baptist Church Choir, Springfield, from 6:45-7:45 p.m., south of the visitors center.

- A retreat ceremony, by the 114th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, at 7:45 p.m. south of the visitors center.

- Marches, show tunes and patriotic music performed by the Springfield Municipal Band from 8-9:15 p.m. south of the visitors center.

- An aerial fireworks display over the Lincoln Home, with background music by the Springfield Municipal Band, from 9:15 until about 9:35.

From 8 a.m. until 7:30 p.m., internationally known Lincoln artist Lloyd Ostendorf of Dayton, Ohio, will be at the visitors center to autograph copies of a limited edition of his book "Abraham Lincoln: The Boy, The Man."

Also from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., special first-day postmark cancellations will be available at the visitors center postal substation. Also available are special commemorative collectors envelopes and reopening cachets.

Special exhibits at the visitors center will include historic prints and photographs of Lincoln, his family and the home from the collection of Jack Smith, South Bend, Ind., and an exhibit of photographs by Joe Winkelman detailing the restoration work done on the home.

Throughout the day, visitors can see demonstrations of Lincoln-era crafts presented by the Clayville Folk Arts Guild, and a military encampment by the reactivated 17th Illinois Cavalry.

A special children's activity area, featuring 19th-century children's games, will be set up in three vacant lots two buildings north of the Lincoln Home.

Costumed guides will give information on other homes in the Lincoln neighborhood throughout the day. The guides are provided by the Junior League of Springfield, which coordinated the activities for the reopening.

Renovation of Springfield home paints brighter picture of Lincoln

By Chad Carlton
Chicago Tribune

Springfield—Clunking boardwalks and white picket fences lead up to the freshly painted, two-story dwelling at the corner of gravelled 8th and Jackson Streets.

The shiny coat of mocha brown only hints at what a year-long, \$2.2 million renovation has done to the 149-year-old house. A coal-black nameplate on the walnut door explains all the fuss.

"A. LINCOLN," silver-leaf, block letters read.

After months of sleuthwork and surgery, Abraham Lincoln's Home has emerged stronger, brighter and more historically accurate inside and out.

The National Park Service has transformed the time-worn shelter into a time-warped showplace, using the skills of nearly 100 carpenters, researchers, architects, refinishers and others.

The home, where Lincoln lived for 17 years, is the only house the 16th U.S. president ever owned. It's the centerpiece of a preserved four-block neighborhood—a snapshot of upper-middle class abodes of the mid-19th Century—where gaslight street lamps and sprawling trees border the wide streets, which are off limits to cars.

Myriad changes—some visible, some not—have been made since the landmark was closed in May of last year. And, in the process, researchers and workers have uncovered several lost pieces of the past, including a cache of letters.

The anticipated one million people who will visit the home in the next 12 months will see a splash of color—mostly in replica rugs, wallpaper and drapes.

Somber tones, the mark of past restoration efforts, have been proven wrong by re-examination of old photographs, written descriptions and known tastes of the times.

Nowhere are the livelier shades more visible than the dining room.

Brilliant bouquets of flowers—red, pink, blue, yellow and orange—leap out of the gray wall-

paper. Another spectrum of colors is woven into the hand-made carpet.

The color coordination is not as evident in the connecting sitting room, where young Tad and Willie played by day and guests chatted with Abe and Mary by night.

Kelly-green drapes flow from ceiling to floor, burgundy wallpaper with cream swirls covers the walls and a gold-trimmed mirror hangs near the front.

Decorators consulted several historians and Mid-Victorian-era decorating guides before completing the setting, said park historian George Painter.

Visitors will also notice a homey touch with the addition of knickknacks on tables and personal possessions left around the rooms.

Slate-gray carpeting and a wood-grain railing, separating the present from the past, lead visitors into the front parlor.

There, figurines sit on a table and candelabra rest on the mantel. Small busts, including one of Lincoln, and flower vases are on shelves.

In the adjoining back parlor, a discarded newspaper lies on a black horsehair upholstered couch. The back parlor was a library where Lincoln spent hours reading William Shakespeare's works and drafting political speeches, Painter said.

Books and papers are scattered across the marble-top octagonal table, a testament to Lincoln's disorganization. And a ceramic spittoon for guests (Lincoln didn't chew) sits at the end of the couch.

Upstairs in the boys' room, dominoes and marbles seem ready for play. A writing slate and books appear ready for work.

But the most candid addition to the home is an unfettered stroll through the Lincolns' separate bedrooms, a commonplace arrangement in the mid-19th Century.

The wallpaper, with its piercing cobalt blue swashes and a tangle of brown and white, invigorates the rooms.

A four-poster bed seems too short for Abe's lanky frame, but the 6-foot-4-inch statesman fit comfortably, Painter assured.

A shaving mirror, one of the 65 original Lincoln pieces in the home, is adjusted to just the right height. And two straight-edge razors sit on a wash basin ready for trimming around Lincoln's beard.

In Mary's room, combs rest on the dresser and a dress drapes across her bed. A white porcelain foot tub stands ready for soaking beside the tin stove.

Before, visitors could only glance into the two rooms because the floors were weak. The tour took people through the guest room and into the boys' room through doors cut out during a 1950s renovation.

Now, those doors have been walled over and people will walk through the middle of the Lincolns' rooms—bounded by the carpet trail, but not railings.

"We wanted to let people experience the room," said Vance Kominski, supervisor of the park service project.

The up-close view was made possible by reinforcing the sagging floors with steel beams, which are just some of the improvements made to the home that are invisible to visitors, said Kominski, an architect.

A snaking mass of ductwork, plumbing and wiring now lies hidden in the walls, floors, ceilings and basement.

The modern additions include smoke detectors, a sprinkler system, intruder alarms and heating and cooling systems.

Kominski said the equipment was added to protect and strengthen the home while maintaining most of its authenticity.

Termites had gnawed away at wooden beams, and sunlight and changing humidity had taken their toll on the furniture.

Workers added tons of concrete and steel below the house for support. Storm sashes were placed on the windows to filter out ultraviolet

See Lincoln, Pg. 10



Dominoes seem to be waiting for son Robert Lincoln to come in and play in his room.

Lincoln

Continued from preceding page
rays. Insulation was added inside the walls and a \$76,000 heating and cooling system was stowed away in the basement and the backyard.

In the innards of Lincoln's Home, workers made several finds. As they were peeling back a kitchen wall to add insulation, workers came across a stack of documents buried beneath crumbled plaster.

Four letters to Lincoln, an envelope, a printed congressional speech and a newspaper clipping were apparently stuffed beneath the baseboard by the Lincoln children, said Thomas Schwartz, curator of the Lincoln Collection at the Illinois Historical Library.

None of the items proved to be of great historical significance. But the newspaper clipping—a large advertisement for lightning rods—bolsters the belief that Mary was deathly afraid of lightning storms.

While workers were probing the walls of the home, they also came upon a hidden stairway that had been covered by Lincoln-era remodeling.

This stairway led off of the main stairway to an east wing garret,

likely used as a maid's quarters and for storage, Painter said.

Another architectural discovery was the number of additions made to the home during the Lincolns' stay.

Lincoln bought the 5-year-old house in the spring of 1844 from Rev. Charles Dresser, who married the Lincolns.

During the 17 years the Lincolns lived in the home, six separate additions turned the simple, single-story cottage into a spacious, two-story house, Kominski said.

Historians aren't sure whether Abe authorized the changes or Mary just had them made while her husband, a traveling lawyer who was gone half of each year, was out riding the Eighth Judicial Circuit, Painter said.

Perhaps the historical find that people will most notice is the true colors of the home's exterior.

Newspaper accounts from 1860 called the paint "Quaker brown," a light muddy shade, and earlier restorations coated the house in that color.

But workers found a chimney wall, boarded over during early renovations, painted a darker shade, Kominski said.

Using microscopic analyses of paint chips from the south porch, researchers verified the coffee-with-

cream shade as the correct color. Old photos confirmed the trim was painted a slightly darker shade than the rest of the house.

During the winter, scaffolding covered with plastic sheeting formed a cocoon around the house. Heaters inside the tent-like structure allowed workers to remove the boards from the exterior so excess paint could be stripped away.

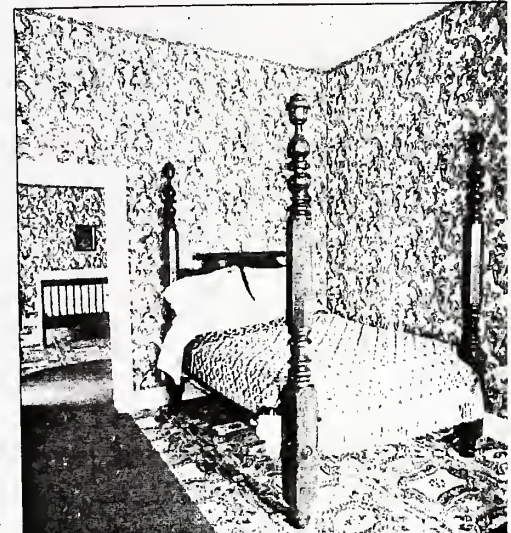
"There were so many coats of paint that you had paint sticking to paint, not wood," Kominski said.

A computer drawing was made of the home and each board was numbered so it could be repositioned exactly. About half of the walnut and pine boards were rotting and were replaced with more durable redwood, Kominski said.

Painters then covered the home with the newly discovered shades of brown and added pine-green shutters—a smart accent to the stately home.

The costly restoration effort now gives visitors a look back in time to the centerpiece of Springfield's upper-middle class neighborhood in 1861.

"At the time Lincoln left for Washington, this is the way it looked," Kominski said. "This is the way he would remember it."



Abe's bedroom and his wife, Mary's, through the doorway, a common sleeping arrangement in the 19th Century.



The 400 acre Jones farm is located 15 miles above Long Island Sound. It is not a farm for raising basic food crops, poultry, cattle, sheep or horses as commonly expected. Although founded as a regular farm by his great-grandfather in 1850, it is now called the Jones Christmas Tree Farm. With three generations working the farm today, they grow not only Christmas trees, but strawberries, blueberries, pumpkins and flowers.

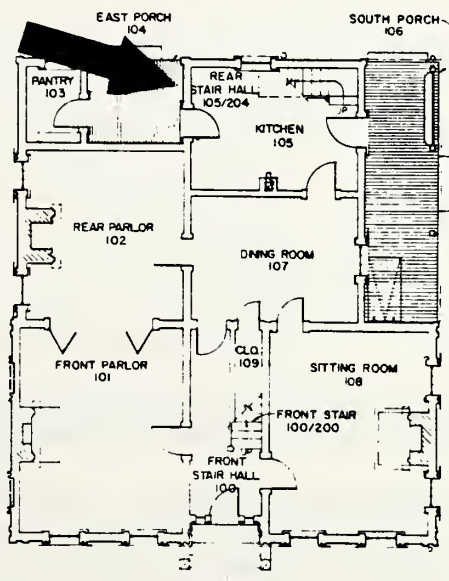
A charter member of the National Christmas Tree Association and editor of the *American Christmas Tree Journal* for ten years, Jones is currently Chairman of the Board of Directors of The American Indian Archaeological Institute. As President of the Manuscript Society, he looks forward to having his fellow members share their ideas and views with him. His first official message appears in this issue.

Lincoln—Confederate Discoveries

The most massive restoration of Abraham Lincoln's Springfield, Illinois home has revealed some rare documentary insights into his character and pre-presidential years.

Found trapped within the north kitchen wall, providing a firm foundation for a field mouse's nest, were two largely intact letters, two letter fragments, a newspaper clipping, a printed congressional speech and an addressed envelope. The National Park Service, busily engaged putting in insulation, concrete and steel undergirding and replacing rotting plaster and wood, immediately called Thomas F. Schwartz, curator of the Lincoln Collection at the Illinois State Historical Society.

Entering through the plastic bubble which covered the entire exterior of the Lincoln Home, Schwartz discovered some interesting clues into Lincoln, the 1840's politician. Only the envelope was in Lincoln's hand, apparently addressed to his Washington, D.C. landlady during his term in Congress. But the other items relate to the unique deal he made that got him to Congress, the Mexican War (which he opposed), constituent services and his love of poetry in discussion with a newspaper editor (just like our modern



Tuesday night
Mar. 11. 1846.

Dear Lincoln
Your article of 4th inst is before me. I fully concur with you as to the propriety of holding a convention, notwithstanding the great number of persons have suggested that there was no necessity for a convention, but I have never been insensible to the propriety of one. I notice in the meeting of our present case appear in the paper of this week, & in the first day of our Court we will get together and do up the business. I had been into Baltimore "getting a table" and looking out for "signs" and "occasional tracks" the week before I recd. the first letter of "reception". You would have gotten the vote of Baltimore for the Convention.

I have heard that the Senator a letter written to some one here, says, if he is never in Congress again he will not leave the district dramatic up his friends. This is undoubtedly probably, for a short at some one.

Yours in fine fidelity

David Dickinson

Lost 1846 letter relating to Lincoln's congressional election

presidents and editors, right?). The newspaper clipping is about lightning rods. The future First Lady feared lightning storms and fire which prompted Lincoln's investigation of fire-prevention systems.

The most interesting manuscript is the March 11, 1846 letter from Whig leader David Dickinson who is responding to Lincoln's letter of March 8. Three years before, Lincoln had arranged for a rotating congressional seat of one term each for deserving Whigs. Now that Lincoln felt it was his turn to run, the incumbent got a case of what is today called "Potomac Fever" and did not want to leave office. Lincoln was able to convince him to step aside, but not a previous officeholder. Lincoln had to correspond extensively with friends in outlying

areas and by reminding them of the agreement and that "turn about is fair play," successfully won the nomination and election.

Society members may wish to visit the Lincoln Home, which reopened last June, as well as the tomb, as Chicago will be the 1989 annual meeting site. A trip to Springfield, however, will not be part of the official schedule and arrangements will have to be made separately.

Among other lost Lincoln items found elsewhere is a printed version of a Mary Lincoln letter. It was found by Wayne C. Temple, chief deputy director, Illinois State Archives in the *Illinois State Journal* (Springfield) for January 9, 1865 on page 41. The existence of this letter was unknown. Dated December 24, 1864 from the Executive Mansion (White House), it is a letter of support to the Soldiers' Fair held at Springfield, Massachusetts. Such fairs were charitable fund raisers for the benefit of the soldiers. The original letter was probably put up for auction at the fair and is not cited in Justin G. Turner and Linda Levitt Turner, *Mary Todd Lincoln: Her Life and Letters* (N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972). Justin Turner was a founder and president of the Manuscript Society. Incidentally, this Turner volume, originally published in 1972 and a best seller, has now been published in paperback by Fromm International Publishing Corporation and sells for \$12.95. Their address is 560 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

Equal time in this report can also be given to the Confederacy. A treasure-house of rare letters, manuscripts and documents in four leather-bound maroon volumes emblazoned with Confederate flags was discovered in the archives of Florida Atlantic University at Boca Raton.

Called "a tremendous find" by Society member Herman Herst, Jr., who appraised the collection for as much as \$100,000, the find was made by none other than Dr. Otto Bettmann, founder of the Bettmann Archives. Bettman, adjunct professor at FAU, was inventorying the school archives when he came across the volumes.

The collection includes a letter from Jefferson Davis to a friend, written only days before his inauguration as President of the Confederate States of America, decrying his own abilities to lead. Another letter is a plea from General Robert E. Lee to Union General George McClellan for an exchange of prisoners in 1862. There are other Lee items. Still another letter is a surgeon's eyewitness account of Stonewall Jackson's last days replete with all their conversations. A piece of Jackson's uniform that he was wearing when he was accidentally shot by his own men is also in the collection.

There is an 1854 letter from Judah P. Benjamin who would hold three Confederate cabinet posts at varying times. Here he writes "A gulf, wide, deep and, I fear, impassable is already opened between the North and Southern Whigs....If I be right in this prediction, God knows what awaits us. The future looks full of gloom to me." The volumes are filled with letters and personal papers of Confederate generals and soldiers, Currier and Ives prints, currency and war bonds, pictures, deeds, stamps, newspaper clippings and political

cartoons. Herst said the Lee and Jackson items were the most important.

Civil War historian Shelby Foote also called the collection "tremendous" and said "It sounds like there are things of really large value there, things none of us knew." Says Herst, "It will take us some time and study to learn the historical importance of this find, but for the layman it portrays the humanitarian side of the Confederate generals and their soldiers."

An anonymous benefactor apparently donated the cache of Civil War papers to FAU's special collections department more than 15 years ago, according to a report in the *Washington Post*. There is no record of the donor's identity in the school's files. FAU's archivist, John Hillis, the great grandson of a Union general, said he knew the volumes were in the library but never realized their historical or monetary value.

The bonds alone bring to mind the cache of 75,000 Confederate bonds sold at a London auction last fall for \$630,000. Today, in general, according to a report in the *New York Times*, old bonds range in price from less than \$100 to more than \$5,000 apiece, depending on their age, scarcity and condition.

The FAU materials are mounted on faded Confederate-gray construction paper. The documents include typed highlights and lot numbers, apparently culled from auction guides, circa 1925. Herst reports that the collection cannot be sold by law, but that parts of it may be eventually placed on exhibit.

Editor's note: We are most grateful to David A. Warren, editor of the Lincoln Legacy of the Lincoln Group of Illinois, and Tom Stevens and Fran Krupko of Springfield, Illinois for the accompanying photographs.

Notice of Theft and Society's Response

A major theft from the University of Oregon Library has just been reported to the Society. A list of the stolen items covers ten typed, single-spaced pages. All the papers relate to the history of the Pacific Northwest from 1840 to about 1870. Books of that period have also been stolen. Many of the items are of extremely high historical value. Anyone with information relating to these thefts or who wishes to get the list should contact Sgt. Richard Hansen, Campus Unit, Dept. of Public Safety, City Hall, 777 Pearl Street, Eugene, Oregon 97401 or call him at 503-686-5444 or 503-687-5131.

This latest theft has spurred the Manuscript Society to offer unique assistance. Since it is important to get the news on manuscript thefts out to dealers and collectors promptly, the Society is offering to provide a set of mailing labels free of charge to those who wish to send notices of such thefts to its members. For details, contact Executive Director David R. Smith, 350 N. Niagara Street, Burbank, California 91505, with a sample of the notice that you wish to send out.

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Preservation News

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Fighting fire at Cabildo, to be restored "as soon as humanly possible," vows Gov. Roemer.

CABILDO BURNS

But restoration launched as help pours in

By Garry Boulard

NEW ORLEANS—Plans to renovate and

Museum, the National Historic Landmark for more than a century has been the state's most popular tourist attraction.

Congress, Trust, locals press Manassas fight

Mounting national concern over the Manassas mall issue continues to spur action and reaction. In order to halt construction of a huge shopping mall next to Manassas National Battlefield Park in Prince William County, Va., Congress is reviewing a new proposal for the speedy federal purchase of land adjacent to the park. The National Trust and other organizations of the new National Heritage Coalition are pressing for protection of Manassas and other national landmarks.

Meanwhile, in Manassas bulldozers already are churning earth to prepare for the controversial mall, planned by a national mall builder and a Virginia developer, which would rise on the 540-acre tract where Confederate General Robert E. Lee established his headquarters in 1862 during the Second Battle of Manassas (PN, April, May, June).

The House Interior Committee's Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands held a hearing June 21 on the Manassas controversy and legislative proposals for federal government purchase of the property. National Trust president J. Jackson Walter and National

Parks and Conservation Association vice president Destry Jarvis testified at the hearing. The National Heritage Coalition was recently formed by the two organizations to protect the Manassas battlefield and other national landmarks from encroaching development. Walter underscored the urgency of the need by announcing a list developed by the Trust of the nation's 11 most endangered historic properties (see page 3). Wilderness Society president George T. Frampton, local residents and local and federal officials also testified.

The hearing highlighted the most recent Manassas measure, by Rep. Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.), which proposes an immediate "legislative taking" of the shopping center site and adding the land to the 3,800-acre battlefield park. The agenda also included discussion of an earlier proposal by Reps. Robert Mrazek (D-N.Y.) and Michael Andrews (D-Tex.) to incorporate the site into the park.

Meanwhile, National Trust members have responded generously to a Trust "preservation alert" sent to them in mid-

Continued on page 3

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Preservation News

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

JULY 1988 \$1.00



Fighting fire at Cabildo, to be restored "as soon as humanly possible," vows Gov. Roemer.

CABILDO BURNS

But restoration launched as help pours in

By Garry Boulard

NEW ORLEANS—Plans to renovate and repair the fire-ravaged Cabildo were launched within two weeks of the May 12 blaze that destroyed the attic and much of the second floor of the historic French Quarter building, one of Louisiana's most treasured.

Robby Cangelosi, president of the Friends of the Cabildo, says help has been offered from "people from around the country who are interested in seeing this structure restored to its original operating condition. Every student in this state is taught that the Cabildo is the most important historic building in Louisiana. I think that may be the reason why we're seeing such an outpouring of interest and concern."

Constructed between 1795 and 1799, the three-story, mansard-roofed structure sits next to St. Louis Cathedral on Jackson Square. The Cabildo served as the seat of the Spanish government in America and was the city hall of New Orleans until 1852. The building was the site of the formal transfer in 1803 of the vast Louisiana Purchase territory to the U.S. Now part of the Louisiana State

Museum, the National Historic Landmark for more than a century has been the state's most popular tourist attraction.

Investigators say the fire probably was started when heat from a worker's soldering torch ignited paper on the Cabildo's roof. Within minutes the fire entered the attic space and traveled 60 to 100 feet during the 10 minute period it went undetected by workers. Although Cangelosi says the "vast majority of our permanent collection was saved during the fire," he notes the loss of, among other things, a chair created in 1849 for President Zachary Taylor, an 1818 map of Louisiana, and nearly 50 pieces of an antique furniture collection on the Cabildo's third floor.

Efforts to size up damage to the building and begin the rebuilding and renovation process were undertaken almost immediately. Calling the Cabildo "an important part of Louisiana's heritage," Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer says: "We will restore that facility. We will do it as soon as humanly possible. The state is willing to explore potential avenues for restoration of this cultural and historic landmark."

Noting that 11 Louisiana architectural

Continued on page 5

Congress, Trust, locals press Manassas fight

Mounting national concern over the Manassas mall issue continues to spur action and reaction. In order to halt construction of a huge shopping mall next to Manassas National Battlefield Park in Prince William County, Va., Congress is reviewing a new proposal for the speedy federal purchase of land adjacent to the park. The National Trust and other organizations of the new National Heritage Coalition are pressing for protection of Manassas and other national landmarks.

Meanwhile, in Manassas bulldozers already are churning earth to prepare for the controversial mall, planned by a national mall builder and a Virginia developer, which would rise on the 540-acre tract where Confederate General Robert E. Lee established his headquarters in 1862 during the Second Battle of Manassas (PN, April, May, June).

The House Interior Committee's Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands held a hearing June 21 on the Manassas controversy and legislative proposals for federal government purchase of the property. National Trust president J. Jackson Walter and National

Parks and Conservation Association vice president Destry Jarvis testified at the hearing. The National Heritage Coalition was recently formed by the two organizations to protect the Manassas battlefield and other national landmarks from encroaching development. Walter underscored the urgency of the need by announcing a list developed by the Trust of the nation's 11 most endangered historic properties (see page 3). Wilderness Society president George T. Frampton, local residents and local and federal officials also testified.

The hearing highlighted the most recent Manassas measure, by Rep. Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.), which proposes an immediate "legislative taking" of the shopping center site and adding the land to the 3,800-acre battlefield park. The agenda also included discussion of an earlier proposal by Reps. Robert Mrazek (D-N.Y.) and Michael Andrews (D-Tex.) to incorporate the site into the park.

Meanwhile, National Trust members have responded generously to a Trust "preservation alert" sent to them in mid-

Continued on page 3



"Just as it was when Lincoln left," the house is ready for visitors.

Lincoln home reopens

By Thomas W. Sweeney

Abraham Lincoln always will be associated with his log cabin birthplace in Kentucky, but the \$2.2 million restoration of his Springfield, Ill. home, which opened at a gala celebration last month, adds a new chapter to the Lincoln legacy.

The two-story late Greek Revival house—the only home Lincoln ever owned—was the family residence from 1844 to 1861. Some 10 million visitors have toured the home since 1972, when the National Park Service assumed its administration from the State of Illinois. June 16 was selected for the day-long reopening of Lincoln's Home because it marked the 101st anniversary of the home's donation to the state by Robert Todd Lincoln, eldest son of Lincoln and his wife Mary.

"The visitor should be able to see the house just as it was when Lincoln left in 1861 for Washington," says Park Service architect Vance Kaminski, who supervised the restoration.

During restoration of the house over the past year by River City Restoration, Inc. of Hannibal, Mo., nearly every part of the structure received attention. Major projects included reinforcing original beams by bolting on concealed steel beams, replacing the roof, adding insulation and reinstalling exterior clapboard siding and replastering the interior. New climate control, security and fire safety systems were added. Installation of a museum-quality atmospheric control system, which maintains constant temperature and humidity levels, required insertion of a plastic vapor barrier within the structure to prevent condensation inside the walls.

The need for the work became apparent when, under the constant strain of the passage of thousands of visitors, the staircase became unstable and the parlor floor

Continued on page 2

Jobbers Canyon trial slated but district razing rolls on

Although wreckers continue to chew away at buildings in the Jobbers Canyon Historic District in Omaha, Nebr., a trial date has been set in the lawsuit brought to block total demolition of the six-block downtown area (PN, May, June; December, 1987). The National Trust has joined the local preservation group PROUD (People for Responsible Omaha Urban Development) in the suit, to be aired July 11 in U.S.

Continued on page 3

Uncommon Books

FROM THE NATIONAL TRUST



10058. Great American Bridges and Dams. Donald C. Jackson. The Preservation Press. 360 pp., illus., biblio., index. \$16.95 (paper). Just Published! Among the 330 feats of engineering genius documented here are bridges that span the United States from Brooklyn to the Golden Gate and landmark dams such as the Hoover, Grand Coulee, Norm's and Shasta. "Connoisseurs of awesome constructions will be delighted by *Great American Bridges and Dams*."—*Condé Nast's Traveler*.

10025. Great American Movie Theaters. David Naylor. Foreword by Gene Kelly. The Preservation Press. 276 pp., illus., biblio., append., index. \$16.95 (paper). Velvet curtains, hanging gardens, atmospheric ceilings and festooned picture palaces illuminate lively entries. Recommended by Leonard Maltin of "Entertainment Tonight."

10061. Masonry: How to Care for Old and Historic Brick and Stone. Mark London. The Preservation Press. 208 pp., illus., biblio., index. \$12.95 (paper). Recently Published. This authoritative handbook answers hundreds of questions about preserving brick and stone buildings, from cleaning and repointing to solving moisture problems. Helpful tables give readers quick, expert guidance. "I live in a 130-year-old house built of Roxbury puddingstone with brownstone trim. I'm glad I read this book!"—Bob Vila, host of PBS's "This Old House."



40229. The Oak Park Home and Studio of Frank Lloyd Wright. Ann Abernathy and John G. Thorpe. The Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio Foundation. 1988. 48 pp., illus., \$8.95 (paper). The book presents a visual tour of the restored building. The text, by former restoration architect Ann Abernathy in collaboration with John Thorpe, focuses on the evolution of the building and the ways it embodies Wright's principles, family life in the home and the restoration. Just Published!

40501. Daughters of Painted Ladies: America's Resplendent Victorians. Elizabeth Pomada and Michael Larsen. E.P. Dutton. 1987. 144 pp., illus., \$29.95 (hardcover). A landmark book about San Francisco's Victorian houses. This book will provide a magnificent source of inspiration to those wishing to preserve and beautify America's Victorian heritage.

40365. Victorian and Edwardian Decor: From the Gothic Revival to Art Nouveau. Jeremy Cooper. Apperby. 1987. 256 pp., \$60.00 (hardcover). This history of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British furniture and decor is of unparalleled breadth. The book contains an astonishing range of photographs and drawings, many in color, offering a comprehensive view of historical styles from Gothic Revival to Art Nouveau.

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Hidden steel beams, historically correct wallpaper and much more went into Lincoln House restoration. Nearly every part received attention.

Lincoln house

Continued from page 1

sagged. Because of the scope of the work involved, River City Restorations vice president Jeff Trevathan says the restoration was one of the most challenging projects his firm has completed. "The sheer number of visitors passing through the home demanded extensive use of steel reinforcement to maintain the structure in the decades ahead. Since no steel was used in the original building of the home, it was a matter of 'writing a new book' in terms of introducing that kind of construction while maintaining historical accuracy."

In order to allow restoration work to continue during harsh winter weather, a plastic box-like structure enveloped the house and heaters warmed it. A well-organized schedule allowed the project to progress in stages throughout the year. In February, for example, walls were backplastered to ensure the longevity of the original plaster, insulation and a vinyl vapor barrier were added to exterior walls and wood siding was replaced. About 40 percent of the original deteriorated siding had to be replaced with new redwood boards.

Originally oak framing was used in construction of Lincoln's Home, which was built as a cottage by the Rev. Charles Dresser, who officiated at the Lincoln's wedding. Lincoln bought the one-story cottage for \$1,500 and gradually enlarged it as the family prospered. The many Lincoln additions, including a second story, were constructed with pine.

Before the plastic shell was removed at the end of winter, the house was repainted its original shade of brown. Inside the house, visitors will see a more authentic depiction of life during the family's years there. Based on newspaper illustrations of the formal parlors, diamond pattern Brussels carpeting was woven in 27-inch strips to replicate the original appearance. New research also revealed the original wallpaper had bold and colorful floral

designs instead of the vertical-lined wallpaper created for the house in the 1950s. Authentic reproductions of the master bedroom and parlor wallpapers were created by Bradbury and Bradbury, a California firm specializing in wallpapers of the 19th century. One small patch of original Lincoln wallpaper, surprisingly unafaded, revealed that cobalt blue was the dominant color. "We had no idea that colors as bright as the cobalt blue were used in Lincoln's day," says Bruce Bradbury, owner of the firm.

About 65 pieces of the Lincoln's furniture and accessories grace the Lincoln Home collection. Other furnishings are authentic to the period of the house. Restoration of 44 pieces of the Lincoln family furniture was completed at the National Park Service's Harper's Ferry Center, a restoration, research and education headquarters for all federal historic sites. A researcher was sent to the home to determine the kinds of woods that were used and the types and colors of upholstery fabrics. "Accurate colors were found by looking where the sun didn't shine: under knobs, where the wood or upholstery faced a wall. Sometimes we peel layers of upholstery down to originals. Samples of woods are sent to laboratories for analysis and verification of types used," says Ron Sheetz, furniture conservator at the Harper's Ferry Center.

During restoration a kitchen wall was opened and workers found four letters written to Lincoln and part of an envelope addressed and signed by Lincoln. A previously unknown cistern, containing pieces of china and glass and other items, was uncovered behind the house, revealing more about the Lincoln's way of living and the authenticity of some items in the collection.

Now that Lincoln's Home is reopened, visitors can enjoy free daily tours of the home as well as the surrounding four-block Lincoln Home National Historic Site, which contains a visitors center and 17 period structures. PN

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ELFRIEDE RILEY

Abraham Lincoln's restored home, the only one he ever owned, is in a four-block historic area.

Holiday Visit to the Land of Lincoln

By FRANK RILEY

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—Gossipy Mrs. Chatterton will have something new to chatter about this holiday season in Abraham Lincoln's hometown.

Dressed in the style of the 1850s, and chattering along as if she is out for a walk in her own neighborhood of that era, Mrs. Chatterton is never at a loss for a lively comment about mid-19th Century life as she guides visitors through the four-block historic area around the newly restored Lincoln Home.

Merchants in this state capital city of 100,000 are "adopting" homes in the historic area, and will compete in Christmas decoration of the entries and front porches. Strolling carolers will salute their work.

The restored Lincoln Home will not be in the competition but will have holiday decorations inside the rooms as well as out front, especially in the family room where Lincoln liked to stretch out on the floor to read Christmas stories aloud, and play with the children.

December Tours

At the Old State Capitol, where Lincoln delivered his "House Divided" speech in 1858 and where his body lay in state after his assassination in 1865, there will be special tours throughout December sponsored by the American Assn. of University Women.

Lincoln debated Stephen Douglas in the old capitol, and it contains the original copy of his Gettysburg Address. The Lincoln Library has the largest collection of documents about his career outside of the Library of Congress.

The new state capitol will be celebrating its centennial holiday season with tours every day (on the hour and half hour) of its vaulted architecture, stained glass and mural paintings.

When the First Presbyterian Church at 3rd and Washington streets holds services before and during the Christmas weekend, tribute will be paid to the Lincoln pew that was moved there from the original church. The bell from the old church that tolled the time of services for Abraham and Mary

Todd Lincoln and their children still rings out.

At Clayville, 14 miles northwest of Springfield, where the outdoor museum presents life of the 19th Century, the old Stagecoach Inn will have a traditional Christmas decorating ceremony Saturday and next Sunday.

In New Salem, 20 miles northwest of Springfield, interpreters dressed for the Lincoln era next weekend will also begin taking visitors through the log cabin village where Lincoln spent his early adult years.

The only home Lincoln ever owned is in Springfield's four-block historic site. As a successful attorney and rising political figure who already had attacked slavery, he was able to pay \$1,200 in cash and exchange a city business section lot worth \$300 for the five-room cottage in 1844.

Two years earlier he had married Mary Todd, who was from a family far more socially prominent than his own. For \$1,300 they later added a second story to the house, which was their home for 17 years until they moved to the White House.

The house has been restored to the era in which they lived here. Many of the original furnishings have been recovered and are back in the home. The carpeting and wallpaper have been reproduced.

Exteriors of the nearby historic homes are also being restored.

The visitor center offers self-guiding booklets as well as programs and films on Lincoln's life in Springfield. The Convention & Visitors Bureau has other self-guiding materials for walking and driving in and around Springfield.

During winter you can also tour by cross-country skis in the parks, on golf courses and across Lake Springfield.

We visited New Salem, where Lincoln and his partner in a store went bankrupt, and where he became "Honest Abe" by paying off the store's debts. There he began studying law, was postmaster, then was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives. With "The Long Nine," all legislators as tall as he was, Lincoln helped bring the state capital to Springfield.

One self-guided historic walking tour starts at the Lincoln Home,

then continues to the Lincoln Depot where he delivered his hometown farewell speech as he boarded the train for Washington and his inauguration as President. He never returned alive.

The words of Lincoln's farewell address to Springfield are remembered in the quiet of his home: "I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return . . . to His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me."

For information on Abraham Lincoln's hometown, including where to stay and dine, contact the Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau, 624 E. Adams St., P.O. Box 1269, Springfield, Ill. 62705-1269. Call toll-free (800) 545-7300, or (217) 789-2360.

Riley is travel columnist for Los Angeles magazine and a regular contributor to this section.

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PRESERVING A NATIONAL TREASURE



LINCOLN'S HOME

Renovation of Lincoln's Home postponed

by Doug Pokorski

The renovation of Lincoln's Home will be postponed at least three months, site superintendent Jim O'Toole said Monday.

The home, which was to have been closed for the work starting this fall, will remain open to visitors until construction begins.

River City Construction Co. of Hannibal, Mo., was awarded the contract for the \$1 million project. However, River City could not secure the required bonding and the project will have to be put up for bids again, O'Toole said.

A bond for the full amount of the project was required as part of the contract. But River City was able to get bonding for only about half the amount needed.

Bonds are like insurance, in that a bonding company agrees to cover the debts if a contractor fails to finish a

project or to pay subcontractors.

Problems in the liability insurance industry were responsible for the bond problems, O'Toole said.

"It's the insurance crisis in general," he said. "The firm that got the apparent low bid bid it in good faith, and they were told by the bonding company that they wouldn't have any problem. (Then) the bonding crisis hit the state of Missouri."

O'Toole said bonding companies now offer bonds only up to double the largest recent project a firm has completed. River City Construction's largest recent project cost about \$250,000, so the firm could get a bond for only \$500,000.

The National Park Service will lower the bonding requirement substantially for the new bids, O'Toole said.

Normally bonding would have to be for the full estimated cost of the project, he said. However, since the

work will be on a time and materials basis, the bonding requirements can be changed.

Working on a time and materials basis gives a contractor the flexibility to cope with unexpected problems, O'Toole said.

"In this type of bid process, what we're looking for is excellence in a firm that's had this type of experience before. That's what they're picked on — the best company that can perform the job to our standards. Then the price is negotiable."

O'Toole said lowering the bonding requirements will probably result in more local bids.

"We would expect that if we lower the bond level we would probably get several Illinois firms that are equally as good (as River City)," O'Toole said.

"We do a lot of contracting at the park and we work with local contractors all the time. We know for a fact

that there were at least two or three firms that did not bid on it because they could not get the bonding.

"My goal is to put everyone back in the game, to allow anyone that would normally bid on that contract to be able to."

No timetable for new bids has been set, O'Toole said. The package will be ready "as quickly as possible," he said, but "there are some time requirements we have."

"We have to advertise it for so many days, so I would say the bid should be awarded in 90-plus days. If everything works perfectly, it looks like the house would close down about February or March."

Site officials still hope to reopen the home by February of 1988, the date originally planned for completion of the work. O'Toole said it may be possible to compensate for the delay by combining some phases of

the project.

The original plan called for a two-part project. The first phase included efforts to preserve the structure of the home, which has nearly 500,000 visitors annually.

Phase I will include installation of climate control systems and structural supporting systems and repairs to parts of the foundation, walls and roof that have deteriorated.

"The home can only last a couple more years (without the structural repairs)," O'Toole said.

Phase II will consist of more cosmetic work, including refurbishing the wallpaper, interior furnishings, walls, windows and lighting.

"We think there's a possibility that we can incorporate a lot of the Phase II stuff into the Phase I and do a lot of it at the same time," O'Toole said. "A lot of that depends upon what kind of inclement weather we receive."

500,000 people later, it's renovation time for the Lincoln homestead

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP)—Abraham Lincoln never counted on 500,000 tourists strolling through his house each year, so experts have started a two-year renovation aimed at helping the 146-year-old building withstand the onslaught.

The project, begun in earnest earlier this month, also is intended to leave the house looking as it did in 1860, when Lincoln was elected president. Historians say it was the most significant year he lived in the house, and descriptions by reporters and other election-year visitors offer clues to its appearance.

Before the facelift begins, architects are checking the house's framework for sagging beams and rotting joists that, along with the wear and

tear of 120 years of tourist traffic, could threaten its stability.

"The house was designed for just one family," said George Painter, National Park Service historian for the Lincoln home. "With 500,000 people coming through, it's bound to need some adjustment."

Lincoln bought the two-story frame house for \$1,500 in 1844 from the clergyman who had presided at his wedding. He was 35, a prosperous lawyer and former state legislator then considering a bid for Congress.

Along with his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, and four sons, he lived in the house until 1861, when the family left to move into the White House. It was the only house Lincoln ever owned.

Experts launch two-year project to fix up the one-family house

The house, administered by the park service since 1972, has undergone several renovations, most recently in the 1950s. Painter said modern research and techniques will produce a more authentic and durable restoration.

Experts surmise that Lincoln, born and raised in log cabins, was not particular about furniture styles and wallpaper patterns. His wife decided on the decor.

One guide to her tastes, Painter said, is a 19th Century text for housewives: "The House Book—A Manual of Domestic Economy for Town and Country." Records of a bookstore show she bought a copy for 85 cents in 1846.

Other clues have come from the records of shops where the Lincolns bought lamps, curtain fabric, wallpaper and other goods.

Where restorers can't determine just how the home appeared in 1860, they'll follow styles common in similar houses of the period. Much of the

house's furniture was chosen that way, since the Washington-bound Lincoln disposed of his household goods in the 19th Century equivalent of a garage sale.

Restorers may take some small liberties with historical accuracy—for example, using a steel beam to shore up the sagging floor under Lincoln's bedroom. An air-conditioning and humidity-control system also is planned to keep antique furniture from cracking or warping.

But they say visitors will never see storm windows or aluminum siding.

Tourists can visit the house as usual this summer because the work is being confined to small exterior areas.

The project's cost won't be known until architects determine how much rebuilding the framework needs.

Painter acknowledged that the years of single-minded sleuthing for trivia about Lincoln's domestic life might seem to border on obsession. But he said the research helps create a sense of authenticity that's important to visitors.

"They want to know, 'Is this the same furniture that Lincoln used? Is this the way the room looked?'" Painter said. "They're seeking something tangible about Lincoln that they can relate to. If we can tell people, 'That wall has original plaster,' that means something."

